Medicine and the Anthroposophical Knowledge of the Human Being

The Healing Process, Spirit, Nature and Our Bodies

Dr. Rudolf Steiner

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Polarities in Health, Illness and Therapy

Since I was asked to speak about the therapeutic principles which have developed out of the anthroposophical view of the world, I will gladly meet this request. However, it is difficult to be brief, especially about this kind of subject matter which is so extraordinarily extensive. In one brief lecture, which can only be aphoristic, one can hardly develop correct ideas of what is important. In addition, certain deliberations must be undertaken in such an attempt which are quite removed from what people generally think about. Nevertheless, this evening I will attempt to present the relevant issues in as generally comprehensive a manner as possible.

The fact that within our anthroposophical movement there is also a medical-therapeutic endeavor is certainly not based upon our desire as anthroposophists to participate in everything and to stick our noses, so to speak, into everything. That is absolutely not the case; but as the anthroposophical movement sought to make its way through the world, physicians too found their way to this movement. They are seriously striving physicians; and a relatively large number of such physicians had come to a more or less clear awareness of how uncertain, how vacillating the views of contemporary, official medicine actually are, of how in many cases the foundations for the actual comprehension of processes of illness and healing are lacking. These foundations are lacking in official medicine because today the

claims for scientific validity are actually based exclusively upon generally accepted natural science. This natural science in turn believes itself to be moving with certainty only with what it can determine in a mechanical, physical or chemical manner from outer nature. It then applies the discoveries made through physics and chemistry about outer natural processes in order to come to an understanding of the human being. But even if there is a kind of concentration, a microcosmic concentration of all world processes within the human being, nevertheless, the outer physical and chemical processes never proceed within the human organism in the same form in which they proceed outside in nature. Man takes the substances of the earth into himself, substances which are not merely passive, but which are actually always permeated by nature processes. A substance only appears outwardly as if it were resting within itself. In reality, everything lives and weaves in the substance. Thus man also takes into his organism these processes, this living and weaving activity, proceeding chemically and physically in nature; but he transforms it immediately in his organism — he makes it into something different.

This something different, which develops out of the nature processes in the human organism, can only be understood if one attains a comprehensive observation of the human being based on reality. But contemporary natural science actually excludes from its realm what proceeds in the human being as

intrinsically human. Even, for example, what proceeds as intrinsically human in the physical body is attributed exclusively to physical and chemical processes; for in the physical body of man nothing takes place which is not at the same time subject to the influences of etheric processes, of astral processes, of ego processes. But as natural science totally ignores these ego processes, these astral processes, this etheric living and weaving, it actually does not at all approach the human being. Therefore this natural science can not really look into the inner activities of the human being in order to comprehend how the outer chemical and physical processes continue to work in him: how they continue to work when he is healthy, and how they continue to work when he is diseased.

How shall it then be possible to properly judge the effects of medicaments, of a remedy, if one has not acquired an understanding for how some substance of nature which we introduce into the human organism, or with which we treat the human organism, continues to work in that organism.

It could indeed be said that the greatest progress imaginable in medicine in more recent times has actually only been made in the area of surgery where one is dealing with external mechanical manipulations, as it were. In contrast, in the area of actual therapy, there reigns great confusion — (this is not my judgment, but the judgment of those physicians

who have become conscious of all this). The reason for this confusion is that the connection between any object of nature and its effect upon illness cannot be understood if, by virtue of a specific point of view which one has about natural science, one actually excludes the human being from scientific considerations.

Since anthroposophy strives to know the human being comprehensively — insofar as he is a super-sensible as well as a material being — it is also possible that anthroposophy can yield knowledge concerning the treatment of illnesses with various natural substances.

Fundamentally speaking, we are already confronting today a kind of boundary in medicine if we ask only for the actual nature of illness. What is illness? This question cannot be answered out of contemporary scientific knowledge. For, what, according to these natural scientific views, are all the processes which proceed in the healthy human being? From the head to the tip of the toes these are processes of nature. But then what are the processes which take place during illness in the liver, kidney, head, heart, wherever? What kind of processes are these? These are also natural processes! All healthy processes are processes of nature; all processes of illness are also processes of nature. Why then is the human being healthy with one sort of natural process and ill with the other sort of natural process?

It is not a matter of speaking in vague generalities: well, yes the healthy processes of nature are normal, but the sick processes of nature are not. One can get the impression that, if one doesn't know anything, there arises "at the proper time," a word, a label for our ignorance.

What is actually going on when customary natural science is applied in approaching the human being? The predominant practice is not to look at the living being, but at the corpse; here and there a piece of the organism is sampled and then various abstractions are made about what kind of healthy or sick natural processes proceeded within it. Thus it actually doesn't matter whether one takes some kind of tissue out of the head, out of the liver, out of the big toe, or the like. Everything is finally reduced to the cell. Gradually histology, the study of tissues and cells, has actually become the most highly developed teaching of the human being. Of course, if one goes into the smallest parts and ignores all other forces, all other relationships, then, as at night all cows are grey, all organs are the same. The result is a benighted "grey cow science," not a true science which acquaints itself with the uniqueness of the separate organs in man.

What must provide the basis there I actually dared to express only a few years ago. Although it is generally imagined that it is easy for spiritual science to come to its results, this matter has occupied me for more than thirty

years. It is thought that one only needs to look into the spiritual world to find out everything, while it is difficult if one has to work in laboratories or in a clinic — there one must really struggle. In spiritual science it is only a matter of looking into the world of the spirit and then one finds out everything. It really isn't that simple. Thorough and responsible spiritual investigation demands more effort and above all more responsibility than the manipulations in the laboratory or in the clinic or observatories. And so it is that the first conception of what I will now briefly indicate in principle stood before me approximately thirty-five years ago. I was only able to speak about it a few years ago after everything was worked through and, above all, verified completely on the findings of the entire contemporary official natural science. It was under the influence of these principles of the membering of the human being that what I just told you about developed — this medical-therapeutic endeavor within our anthroposophical movement.

Even if we confront the human being as a solely physical being, we must definitely distinguish three members which differ one from another. These three different members can be labeled in the most varied ways, but we can best approach them if we characterize them by saying that one system of the physical being is the nerve-sense system which is primarily localized in the head. The second system is the rhythmic system, which encompasses respiration, blood circulation, the

rhythmic activities of the digestive system, and so forth. The third system is represented in the interconnection between the movement system, the system of the limbs, and the actual metabolic system, This interconnection becomes immediately evident to you if you think of the fact that the metabolism is enhanced especially through the movement of the limbs and that inwardly the limbs are organically connected with the metabolic organs. That is directly evident also in anatomy. Just look at how the legs are continued inwardly into the metabolic organs and, similarly, how the arms are continued inwardly. Thus we can now distinguish the nerve-sense system, located primarily in the head; the rhythmic system, located primarily in the chest; and the metabolic limb system, located primarily in the limbs and the attached metabolic organs.

This membering, however, may not be done as a professor once did who wanted to ridicule the anthroposophical movement. He did not attempt to penetrate into what is actually meant with this membering. He said: these anthroposophists maintain that man consists of three systems: a head, a rump consisting of chest and abdomen, and limbs. Of course, in this manner it is easy to ridicule the matter.

What matters is not that the nerve-sense system is only in the head. It is primarily in the head, but it extends over the

entire organism. The head organization spreads out through the entire organism. Similarly, the rhythmic system extends upwards and downwards through the entire organism. Spatially speaking the human being is entirely metabolic-limb system. If you move the eyes, the eyes are limbs. So these systems are not spatially next to one another; instead they interpenetrate one another. They totally interpenetrate and one must accustom oneself a little to an exact thinking if one wants to evaluate this membering of the human being in the right way.

Now both these systems, the first and the third, the nerve-sense system and the metabolic-limb system, are placed polarically opposite each other. What the one creates destroys the other. What destroys the other is created by the one. They thus work in completely opposite ways. And the middle system, the rhythmic system, establishes the connection between the two. There is a kind of vacillation, oscillation, between them, so that a harmony can always exist between the destruction of the one system and the construction of the other system. If, for example, we look at the metabolic system, we recognize that it naturally works with its greatest intensity in the lower body of the human being; but that which goes on within the human abdomen, or the lower body, must call forth the polar opposite activity in the head, in the nerve-sense system, when the person is healthy.

Imagine now that the activity actually inherent in the human digestive system intensifies so much that it extends right up to the nerve-sense system, so that the activity which should actually remain in the metabolic-limb system reaches over to the nerve-sense system. Then you have a natural process, so to speak, but you can see immediately how that natural process becomes an abnormal one. It should remain in the metabolic system, but breaks through, so to speak, upwards into the nerve-sense system.

That results then in the various forms of the illness treated by medicine today as insignificant, but not treated in that way by a large part of humanity because these various forms of illness are known everywhere. What develops is known as the various forms of *migraine*. In order to understand migraine in its various forms we must comprehend this process which ought only to take place in the metabolic system but which breaks through to the nerve-sense system so that the nerves and senses are so affected that the metabolism shoots into them instead of remaining in its own place.

The reverse can also take place. The process which ought to be most intensive in the nerve-sense system, and which is completely opposite to the metabolic process, can in a certain sense also break through to the metabolic system. Consequently an enhanced nerve-sense process takes place in the metabolic system where normally a merely

subordinated nerve-sense process should be active. Thus what belongs to the head, as it were, breaks through into the lower body. If this happens then the dangerous illness develops which is known as typhoid fever (see end-note).

Thus we can see how a fundamental understanding of this three-fold human being makes it possible for us to understand how a process of illness develops out of a healthy process. If our head, with its nerve-sense system, were not organized as it is, then we could never have typhoid fever. If our lower body were not organized as it is, we could never have migraine. The head activity should remain in the head, the lower body activity in the lower body. If they break through then such forms of illness develop.

And just as we can point to two especially characteristic forms of illness, so can we point to other forms of illness which always develop when an activity which belongs to one organ system asserts itself in another place, in another organ system.

If one proceeds only anatomically one merely observes the status of the smallest parts in the tissues of the organism. But one does not see the working of polar opposite activities. When studying the nerve cell you can only study that its organization is opposite to that of the liver cell, for example. If, however, you were able to look into the totality of the

organism in such a way that it appears to you in its three-foldness, then you will also notice how the nerve cell is a cell which continually tends to dissolve, which continually tends to be broken down if it is healthy: and how a liver cell is something which continually tends to be built up if it is healthy. Those are polar activities. They work in the right way upon one another if they are appropriately distributed in the organism; they work incorrectly within one another if they penetrate into one another.

The rhythmic system is in the middle and always strives to create the balance between the two opposed polar activities of the nerve-sense system and the metabolic-limb system.

I would now like to select a special example to let you have insight into how one can find the relationship of a remedy which has been taken from nature with its forces to the health-giving and illness-generating forces active within man.

Let us direct our gaze to an ore which can be found in nature, so-called *antimony*. As soon as we look at it externally we see that it has an extraordinarily interesting property. Its form in nature is such that certain rods develop — stem-like, lance-like structures which lie next to one another — so that if we were to draw the ore schematically we could draw the following:

It grows almost like a mineral moss or a mineral lichen. One can see that this mineral wants to order itself into threads. One can see this even more clearly if we subject it to a certain physical-chemical process. Then the thread-like crystals become even thinner. It orders itself into clusters of very fine threads. Especially important, however, is what occurs when this antimony is subjected to a certain kind of combustion process. You get a white smoke which can then condense on the walls and becomes mirror-like. That is called the antimony mirror. It is hardly respected at all today but in older medicine it was widely used. This antimony mirror, which first arises out of the combustion process and condenses on the walls so that it shines like a mirror is something exceptionally important.

In addition there is another property. I will emphasize only this: if antimony is subjected to certain electrolytic processes and it is brought to the so-called electrolytic cathode, then it is only necessary (after the antimony was subjected to the electrolytic process on the cathode), to exert a slight action on it and a small antimony explosion will occur. In brief, this antimony has the most interesting properties.

If antimony is introduced into the human organism in a moderate dose one can study various processes which show how in fact the same forces which behave as I have just described experience a kind of continuation in the human organism and how they take on all kinds of forms of forces and effects within it.

I can naturally not explain all the details and proofs to you: I only want to briefly sketch for you what is inherent in these forms of activity. These processes which arise in the human organism occur especially strongly wherever blood coagulates. Therefore they strengthen or enhance the coagulation of blood. However, if we use those methods of study which are consistent with an understanding of the threefold human organism, we are permitted to gradually look into the human being and gain knowledge of how the separate systems behave in the different organs. If we look into the human organism in this way, we find that what lives in antimony lives not only outside in the mineral antimony, but also is active as a force-system in the human organism. This force system is always present in the healthy human organism. In the sick human organism it takes on forms of the kind which I have just explained to you.

This antimony process existing in the human organism is opposed in a polar way to another process. It is opposed to that process which arises where the plastically active forces,

for example, the cell-forming forces occur. These are the forces which round out the cells, which form the cellular substance of the human organism. I would like to call these forces, because they are primarily contained in protein substance, the *albuminizing forces*. Thus we have in the human organism the forces which we find outside in human nature in antimony if we subject antimony, for example, to combustion, and bring about an antimony mirror. In addition we also have the opposing forces active, the *albuminizing forces*, which immobilize, which take away the *antimonizing forces*.

These two force systems, albuminizing and antimonizing, work against one another in such a way that they must be in a certain state of equilibrium in the human organism. One must now recognize that the process which I have described to you before in principle, and which lies at the basis of abdominal typhus, is essentially based on a disturbance of the balance between these two force systems.

In order to look properly into the human organism one must be able to take recourse to that which I have described to you from the most varied — although not medical — points of view in these morning lectures.

In them we have seen how man has not merely his physical body, but also an etheric body — a body of formative forces,

an astral and an ego organization. And just yesterday I was able to explain to you how there is an intimate connection on the one hand between the physical body and the formative force body, and on the other, between the ego and the astral body. There is a looser connection between the astral body and the formative force body, for they separate every night.

This interconnection, which consists of a working into one another of the forces of the astral and etheric bodies, is radically disturbed in typhoid fever. In this illness the astral body becomes weak and is unable to work with a corresponding intensity into the physical body because it works for itself thereby bringing about that excess which presses downward, so to speak, the nerve-sense organization, which is primarily subject to the astral body. Instead of transforming itself into metabolic activity, it remains active as astral activity. The astral body works for itself. It does not work properly into the etheric body. The consequences are the symptoms of illness which give us the symptomatology of typhus.

Now that which occurs as antimony is active in such a way that antimony denies its mineral nature. It gets crystalline threads, so that even the antimony mirror, wherever it deposits, appears like ice-flowers in the window, thereby showing the inner force of crystallization as in nature. This force of crystallization, which becomes active in antimony, if it

is properly incorporated into a remedy and introduced into the organism, works in such a way that it supports this organism enabling it to insert its astral body with its forces into the etheric body in the right way, so that it can bring these bodies again into the right connection.

With antimony prepared in a proper way into a remedy we support that process which opposes the typhus process. And just with this antimony remedy, to which other substances are added, one can battle against the illness by stimulating and supporting processes in the organism so that it unfolds its own, I would like to say, antimonizing force which has as its goal to call forth the proper rhythm in the working together of astral body and etheric body. Other substances must be mixed in to establish a proper connection to the organism depending on whether an illness takes one or another course.

Thus an anthroposophical consideration leads to the recognition of a relationship between what is active in the objects of nature, as I have shown you with the example of antimony, and that which is active within the human organism. You will be able to follow up this albuminizing, this plastically rounding force, and the other force which works linearly right into the germ cell.

Whoever has truly gained knowledge in this field — however uncomfortable it may be for him to say so, because

he knows he will call forth hate and antipathy in certain people — and who thus looks into the operation of the human organism will consider the otherwise amazing and wonderful microscopic studies about the germ cell, exceptionally dilettantish. There people look externally at the egg cell, observe the development of the so-called centrosomes — you can read about that in any textbook about embryology, — without knowing how these albuminizing forces, which also rule throughout the entire human organism, are opposed, polarically opposed, to the antimonizing forces. The rounding of the egg cell as such is brought about by the albuminizing forces; the centrosomes, after fertilization, are called forth by the antimonizing forces.

That, however, goes on in the entire human body; and by preparing remedies in the right way, and knowing through the diagnosis where one must support the human organism, one introduces into this organism the forces which can work against a process of illness.

By bringing anthroposophical points of view into medicine a connection is established between the macrocosm and the human being. Naturally I would have to say much more about antimony if I wanted to scientifically explain it in detail, but I only want to point out general principles here. In addition I wanted to tell you about the processes which antimony is able to bring forth out of itself, which it has in itself, depending on

how one treats it.

I could also show you now, as an example, the entire behavior within nature and its processes for that which we call *quartz*, or *silicic acid*. It is one of the constituents of granite. It is transparently crystalline and so hard that you can't score it with a knife at all. If we treat this substance in the proper way and administer it to the human organism — in the proper doses that are determined from the diagnosis — then it gains the characteristic of being able to support that which is to be active in the nerve-sense system, which the organism through the nerve-sense system is to bring forth as the intrinsic forces of this system. So what, by rights, the senses actually should do is supported by the remedy, which is prepared in the right way from quartz, or silica and administered in the proper doses. It is necessary then, depending upon the accompanying symptoms, to add still other substances, but here it is primarily a matter of the effect of that which lies in the silicic acid formation process. Thus if one brings this silicic acid formation process into the human organism, then a weak activity in the nerve-sense system is supported so that it then works with the proper strength. Now if this nerve-sense

activity becomes too weak, then the digestive activity is able to penetrate through to the head and the migraine-like symptoms develop.

If one then supports the nerve-sense activity in the right way with a remedy which is produced in the proper manner out of silicic acid, the nerve-sense system becomes so strong in the person suffering from migraine that it can again press back the digestive process which broke through.

Naturally I am characterizing these matters somewhat crudely, but you will see what is significant here. What matters is to really be able to see through the healthy or ill human organism, not merely in accordance with its cellular composition but according the forces active in it, whether they work co-operatively, rhythmically or in opposition. Then one can look in nature for what in the human organism can fight against this or that process of illness.

Thus one can find, for example, how the process which is contained in *phosphorus* is in outer nature a process which, if introduced into the human organism, works in a supportive way upon a certain kind of inner disability of the human organism; namely, when the human organism becomes incapable of allowing to act in the right way certain forces, which should always work in the healthy organism. This is when a person has too little strength and cannot let certain

forces be active within him which are a kind of organic combustion process which is always present in the transformation of substances in the human organism. This takes place in every movement, in all that man does, and also in what is active within organic combustion processes. Now the human organism can become too weak to regulate these organic combustion processes in the proper way, for they must be inhibited in a certain manner. If they are insufficiently inhibited, they develop an excessive activity. The organic combustion processes in themselves actually always have an immeasurable, unlimited intensity. If that were not so, an excessive fatigue would arise immediately, or one would be unable to keep moving. However, the organism must also continuously have the possibility of inhibiting the boundless intensity of the organic combustion processes.

If now these inhibiting forces are neither in an organ system nor in the entire organism, if the organism has become too weak to inhibit its organic combustion processes in the proper way, then there develops something which manifests itself as *tuberculosis* in the most various forms. The suitable nutrient soil for the bacilli is created through this organic loss of strength, through the inability of the organism to inhibit the combustion processes.

Nothing will here be said against the bacterial theory which to a certain extent is very useful. In the various ways by which

bacilli arise here or there one can naturally find out many things; for purposes of diagnoses one can generally get a lot of information. In no way do I want to say anything against official medicine, except that it needs to be augmented and developed further when it arrives at certain boundaries — and it can be developed further when the points of view of anthroposophy can be applied to it.

If *phosphorus* is then introduced into the human organism, then these capacities of containing the organic combustion process are supported. But one must see to it that this containment can emanate from the various organ systems. Let us begin by looking at the system which primarily works in the bones. There the activity of phosphorus in the human organism must be supported in that one directs it towards the bones. That can happen when one combines the remedy phosphorus — in a way which becomes clear through a more exacting study of the matter — with *calcium* or a *calcium salt*. When dealing with tuberculosis of the small intestine one will mix some kind of *copper* compounds in the right dosage with the phosphorus. When dealing with a pulmonary tuberculosis, one will add *iron* to the phosphorus. But still other additions come under consideration since pulmonary tuberculosis is an exceedingly complicated disease. Thus you see that the possibility of a true therapy is based on how the chemical and physical processes continue to work on in the human organism.

Official medicine often starts out from the opinion that the working of the antimony forces outside in nature is the same as it is in the human organism, but that is not the case. One must be clear about how these processes work on in the human organism, and this can be seen if one applies actual anthroposophical insights to the experiments which must be done.

We have seen how antimony establishes the rhythm between the astral body and the etheric body. Now we can see how the forces which are active in quartz are especially suitable to reestablishing the proper relationship, when it has been disturbed, between the ego and the astral body, in order thereby to work in a healing way upon the nerve-sense system. We can also see how calcium — especially that calcium which is obtained from the calcium excretions of animals — provides remedies which establish the proper relationship between the body of formative forces, the etheric body and the physical body.

Thus one can say that a correct view of the human being leads to the use of calcium or something similar, namely, what is secreted from the animal organism, — oyster shells, for example — in order to establish the proper relationship between the etheric body and the physical body, which, if out of balance, always expresses itself in physical processes of illness. That is what one must reflect upon when preparing

remedies from such calcareous or similar excretions.

When dealing with an arhythmic working together of the body of formative forces and the astral body, one must look for what is present in antimony, and also in numerous other metals. If one wants to use remedies prepared from plants, one must also look especially into those constituents which are contained in the middle parts of the plants, those which are particularly present in the leaves and stem, whereas those forces which correspond to the phosphorus process are contained primarily in the blossom organs of the plants. Those processes which correspond to the silicic acid process are contained in the root organs of the plant. Thus one finds relationships between the forces which are in the various parts of the plant and the human organism. The root forces have a definite relationship and connection to the human head and to the nerve-sense system; the leaves and the stem organs have a specific connection to the rhythmic system; the blossom organs have a special connection to the metabolic system.

If one therefore wants to give assistance in a simple way to the digestive, metabolic system, that can often successfully be done — after having made the diagnosis in the correct way — by choosing certain blossoms of which one makes a tea. In this way one can assist the digestive organs. If one wants to gain a remedy which works especially upon the nerve-sense

processes, upon the head organization, one would have to extract the salts from the roots by a special extraction process.

Thus it is necessary to penetrate into nature on the one hand and into the human organism on the other. Then it is possible to really find the remedies in nature so that one can see how the two are connected. Otherwise one does things by trial and error in order to find out how something works only to discover that it is not valid, or to write up a number of cases where 90% or 70% showed a favorable result, but 40% were unsuccessful. Then the matter is statistically treated, and depending on what result the statistics yielded, a determination is made whether or not a particular remedy should be used.

Because of the brief time available I can only speak about these matters aphoristically in order to indicate how in fact, without succumbing to dilettantism or medical sectarianism, one can proceed strictly in accordance with science in approaching illness processes through remedies which come out of a full perception of man.

Just as the correct knowledge of natural substances and natural processes is important in order to create a remedy, so it is equally important to know the specific manner of application of the remedy.

One can either work upon the nerve-sense system in bringing about, in the right manner, the process of healing, or one can work on the rhythmic system, or on the metabolic-limb system. In order to work on these different systems it is essential to know how the method of treatment must be initiated, for almost every remedy can be used in three different ways. To begin with it can be taken orally. This makes it possible for a person to take up the remedy through the metabolic system, which then in turn works upon the other systems. Some remedies are meant to be used in just this way.

There are also, however, remedies which can be used in a way which allows them to work directly on the rhythmic system. (In this connection antimony will provide a good example for finding the proper method of treatment.) This is where administration by injection must be introduced. Injecting the remedy intravenously or sub-cutaneously is the mode of administration which can best work upon the rhythmic processes in man.

In those remedies used in ointments, or in baths, or even wherever there is a question of treating the human organism in an external, mechanical way, for example in massage, then one can count upon this method of treatment as working primarily upon the nerve-sense system.

One can thus work through every organ system in the most varied ways in an effort at working towards a healing process. Let us assume we have silica, or quartz. It makes quite a difference whether we prepare this remedy to be taken by mouth or to be injected. If we count upon the fact that it will be taken by mouth then we will be preparing it to work through the digestive system, and the digestive system in turn can send forces into the nerve-sense system. We are then introducing the quartz processes by detour through the digestive system. If, however, we see that more quartz processes need to be transmitted to the nerve-sense system by introducing them via the rhythmic system, via the blood and breath, then we inject the remedy and thereby attempt to heal by way of the rhythmic system.

If we want to work therapeutically by way of the digestive organs with aromatic ether substances contained in the blossom of the plant, then we will prepare a tea and introduce it into the gastro-intestinal tract by having the patient drink it. If we want to bring etheric oils which, through their aromatic properties, work directly upon the nerve-sense system — or working first upon the nerve-sense system and then into the rhythmic system — then we could make some kind of bath to which we add the juices of the blossoms. In this manner we work upon the nerve-sense system.

Thus we see how the healing effect of the different

substances brought into a relationship to man depends on the various methods of application and treatment. This will become transparently clear if anthroposophical knowledge is more and more applied to bringing about a connection between nature processes and the human being. It can then become evident through anthroposophy *which* remedies one needs to apply and *how* one needs to apply them.

In this way something can be brought about in the laboratories within our clinical-therapeutic institutes and other endeavors in which physicians are involved making it possible that on the one hand, remedies and therapeutic methods can be tried out, and on the other hand, the remedies themselves can be prepared. We have such clinical institutes as well as chemical-pharmaceutical laboratories in Arlesheim, near Dornach, as well as in Stuttgart.

I must point here especially to the Clinical-Therapeutic Institute in Arlesheim (now the Ita Wegman Klinik) which is under the exceptional direction of Frau Dr. Ita Wegman, who unfolds an activity full of blessing for that institute because she has that which I would like to call “the courage to heal.” It is evident that this courage to heal is necessary, especially if you look on the one hand into the complexity of natural processes out of which healing processes must be drawn forth, and on the other hand into the immense complexity of processes of illness and health in man. — If a physician

confronts this vast field even if he only has a certain number of patients, then she or he is required to have courage in order to heal.

Attached to this Arlesheim Institute is the International Pharmaceutical Laboratory (now the Weleda) in which remedies are produced. They can be used today in the entire world. The pharmacy produces the remedies and it is up to others to find the ways and means to make use of them. That is the essential point. People must find the right ways and means to arrive at the right remedies without being dilettantes. Then contemporary science will not be negated; rather, it will be taken further, extended.

If this knowledge becomes widely known, the success of such an endeavor as the International Pharmaceutical Laboratory in Arlesheim will not be a problem. But it is difficult in the face of the prevalent, purely materialistic direction of medicine to bring into the world effective therapeutics which are based upon a full knowledge of man. To bring about a change one would have to count upon the insight of every person who has a heartfelt interest in the health of his fellow man.

In pointing to that which can be achieved through natural remedies and their appropriate application, I certainly do not want to exclude what can be achieved by more soul-spiritual

processes of healing. In this realm one can make especially fruitful observations. If we now carry hygienic-therapeutic considerations — as always must be the case in a proper pedagogy — into the school, one can see how the manner in which one works upon the children in a soul-spiritual manner in instruction can have an effect on the health and illness of a person — if not immediately, then certainly in the course of life. When I give pedagogical lectures I naturally speak about these matters in greater detail. I will mention only one example: the teacher can proceed properly in relation to the memory of the child only if he expects neither too much nor too little. If he proceeds improperly, if he places too many demands on the memory in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh years of life, then he does not have the proper pedagogical tact. What the soul must go through in an excessive activity of memory, or artificially nurtured activity of memory, will live itself out later in life as all kinds of physical illnesses. It is possible to establish a connection between diabetes and erroneous methods in education in relationship to memory. So too can the use of memory in education to the opposite extreme also have unfavorable effects upon a child.

I can mention this only in principle, but one can see from it not only how the natural remedies work in health and illness, but also how the special manner in which the soul itself works can be significant to health and illness.

Starting from there one can also find one's way to those methods whereby we attempt, through purely soul-spiritual influences, from person to person, — which I naturally cannot describe in detail any more today — to bring about processes leading to healing. Especially in this realm, however, it is very easy to get into dilettantism. One can, for example, harbor the belief that the so-called mental illnesses can be most easily healed through spiritual influences (for example by discussion). However, mental illnesses especially distinguish themselves by the fact that one can hardly approach the ill person with rational discussion. As a matter of fact it is just that impossibility of rational exchange which closes off the soul against outer influences in the so-called mentally ill. But one will find over and again that especially in so-called mental illness — which actually has been, as such, incorrectly named — physical processes of illness are present in a hidden way somewhere. Before one wants to meddle in a dilettantish way with mental illness, one ought actually, with the proper diagnosis, to determine which physical organ is involved in the illness. Only then will one be working beneficially through a corresponding healing of the physical organism.

One can help physical illnesses much sooner through all kinds of soul-spiritual (mental-psychological) influences, This is being done today but generally in a dilettantish way. I will not go into that now, Especially in physical illness much benefit will come in this way and the outer process which is

brought about through remedies and the like will be supported in different ways.

I can only indicate this, Those methods which are based on the foundation of anthroposophy certainly do not exclude therapeutic soul-spiritual influences; rather, they include them. You have evidence of this in the Clinical Therapeutic Institute in Arlesheim-Dornach. Besides the physical-therapeutic methods you also find curative eurythmy.

This curative eurythmy consists in taking what you have seen here as artistic eurythmy and transforming it into health-giving movements for the person moving them, The vowel aspect is transformed so that the person makes healthy movements which are drawn out of eurythmy and are applied specifically in support of those forces which earlier I have called the albuminizing forces in man, while the consonant forces in many ways support the antimonizing forces, Thus it is possible through the working together of consonant and vowel eurythmy to bring about a balance between these two kinds of forces, And it can show there, if things are done properly, not in a dilettantish manner, how other healing processes, also in chronic illnesses, can be immensely supported through this curative eurythmy.

This curative eurythmy is actually based upon the fact that soul-spiritual processes are awakened through that which

man does with his limbs. If one knows which movements want to come directly forth out of the healthy human organism, then one can also find the corresponding movements which will work in a healing way if one works back from the limbs, i.e. from the human movement, upon the processes of the inner organs.

In the Clinical Therapeutic Institute in Arlesheim the possibility exists to look at this curative eurythmy and to see how it, as a therapy, can be a specialized branch within the entire therapeutic process, a therapy which can be discovered out of true anthroposophical knowledge of man. It would naturally be going too far to discuss details in this area. The principles are actually given in what I have presented to you.

Thus it has happened that in the most varied ways we have had to develop this therapeutic endeavor within the anthroposophical movement because those involved in therapy have approached us. It has been a demand arising from the condition of the times. It was so-to-speak demanded by contemporary civilization. Anthroposophy has only given the answers to questions which were posed to it.

I really could only present the principles aphoristically to you today. More has not been possible during the available time. If I wanted to present matters in their totality, then I would have to do what I refused to do two days ago during the

lecture on eurythmy. I would have to invite you to stay here through the night and listen to me till tomorrow morning, until the morning lecture. But that is something that would make you sick, and it would certainly be inappropriate for someone who wants to speak about bringing health to make people sick in this way. Therefore I must send you home for a healthy sleep following this sketchy presentation.

Note 1:
A febrile illness of prolonged duration which is marked by hectic fever, delirium, enlargement of the spleen, abdominal pain, and a variety of systemic manifestations such as headache, diarrhea, skin lesions, and more.

Spiritual Science and the Art of Healing:Two Lectures

Lecture 1

THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY here has invited me to give a course of lectures on Education and has expressed the wish that I should also give one or two Public Lectures dealing with anthroposophical Spiritual Science in relation to the Art of Healing.

It will be necessary for me to begin this evening with a sort of introductory lecture, and deal with the actual subject itself in the two following lectures. I must do this because there are so many people in the audience to whom Anthroposophy is still but little known; and lectures dealing with a special subject would remain rather in the air if I did not begin with some introductory remarks treating of Anthroposophy in general before coming to definite observations in the domain of medicine.

Anthroposophy is indeed not as is so often said of it, some kind of craze, or a sect; it stands for a serious and scientifically-considered conception of the world; but a conception of the world which is applied just as seriously to the spiritual domain as we are accustomed to apply our modern scientific methods to the material domain. Now it might appear to begin with to many people that any

suggestion of the spiritual at once introduces something unscientific, for the reason that people are generally inclined to the idea that only those things can be grasped scientifically which can be experienced by the senses, and carried further by means of the reason and intellect. It is the opinion of many people that directly we step over into the spiritual it implies renunciation of Science. It is said that decisions with regard to spiritual questions rest upon subjective opinion, upon a kind of mystical feeling, which everyone must manufacture for himself; “faith” must take the place of scientific knowledge. The task of this introductory lecture shall be to show that this is not the case.

Above all, Anthroposophy does not set out to be “Science” in the generally-accepted sense of the word as something that lies apart from ordinary life and is practised by single individuals who are preparing for some specialised scientific career; on the contrary, it is a conception of the world which can be of value for the mind of every human being who has a longing to find the answers to questions regarding the meaning of life, the duties of life, the operation of the spiritual and material forces of life, and how to turn this knowledge to account. Hitherto in the Anthroposophical field there has been unfailing success in achieving entirely practical methods of applying Anthroposophical principles, more especially in the sphere of education. We have founded schools, which are organised on the basis of these conceptions. And in many

well-recognized ways we have succeeded in a similar manner with regard to the art of healing. Anthroposophy does not wish to create obstacles in any sphere, or to appear in opposition to anything that is in the nature of “recognized science;” it will have nothing to do with dilettantism. It is above all anxious that those who wish earnestly to work out what has been given as Anthroposophical knowledge, shall prize and admire all the great achievements that have resulted — with such fullness in recent times — from every kind of scientific endeavour. Therefore there can be no question (in the medical sphere or any other) of anything like dilettantism, nor of any opposition to modern science. On the contrary, it will be shown how by following certain spiritual methods one is in a position to add something to that which is already accepted, and which can only be added when the work of serious investigation is extended into the spiritual world itself.

Anthroposophy can do this because it strives after other kinds of knowledge which, do not prevail in ordinary life or in ordinary science. In ordinary life, as in our customary scientific methods, we make use of such knowledge which we attain when in the course of our development we add to our inherited tendencies and capabilities what we can gain through the usual lower or higher grades of schooling, and which together make us into ripe human beings in the sense in which that is understood to-day. But Anthroposophy goes further than this; it desires to start from what I may call

intellectual modesty. And this intellectual modesty (which must be there to begin with if we are to develop a feeling for Anthroposophy) I should like to characterise in the following manner.

Let us consider the development of a human being from earliest childhood onwards. The child first appears in the world showing outwardly in its life and inwardly in its soul nothing of that by which a fully-developed human being finds his orientation in the world through actions and knowledge. There must be education and upbringing in order to draw out of the childlike soul and bodily organism those capacities which have been brought into the world in a dormant or “unripe” state. And we all admit that we cannot in the true sense of the word become active inhabitants of the world if we do not add to our inherited tendencies all those things which can only come by a process of unfolding and drawing them out. Then sooner or later, according to whether we have completed a higher or lower grade of education, we step out into life, having a particular relation to life, having the possibility of unfolding a certain consciousness with regard to our surroundings. Now any one who approaches the intentions of Anthroposophy with true understanding, will say: Why should it not be possible — seeing that it is possible for a child to become something entirely different when its soul-qualities are developed — for such a thing to take place also in a man who is “ripe” according to the standard of to-day?

Why should not a man who enters the world fully equipped with the best modern education, also contain hidden capacities in his soul which can be developed further, so that he can progress by means of this development to still further knowledge, and to a practical conduct of life which to some extent can be a continuation of that which has brought him as far as the ordinary state of consciousness?

Therefore in Anthroposophy we undertake a kind of “self-development” — which is to lead out beyond the ordinary condition of consciousness.

There are three faculties in the human soul which are developed normally in life up to a certain point, but which we can unfold further; and Anthroposophy provides the only means in this our modern age of culture and civilisation which will create the necessary stimulus for the further development of these faculties. All three faculties can be so transformed as to become the faculties of a higher kind of knowledge.

First there is the *Thinking*. In the culture that we have acquired we use our thinking in such a way that we give ourselves over quite passively to the world. Indeed, Science itself demands that we should employ the least possible inner activity in our thinking, and that that which exists in the outer world should only speak to us through the observation of our senses; in fact that we must simply give ourselves over

altogether to our sense-perceptions. We maintain that whenever we go beyond this passivity we are only led into dreams and fantastic notions. But where Anthroposophy is concerned, there is no question of fantasy or dreaminess, but of the exact opposite; we are guided to an inner activity which is as clear as any method leading maybe to the attainment of mathematics or geometry. In fact we comport ourselves with regard to Anthroposophy precisely in the same way as we do with regard to mathematics or geometry, only in Anthroposophy we are not developing any special attribute, but on the contrary, every faculty that is connected with human hearts and minds — the whole sum of what is human. And the first thing that has to be done is something which, if people are only sufficiently free from prejudice, can be readily comprehended by everyone. It is simply that the capacity and the force of Thinking should be directed for a time not in order to grasp or understand some external thing, but just in order to allow a thought to remain present in the soul — such a thought as may be easily observed in its totality — and to give oneself up entirely to this thought for a certain length of time.

I will describe it more exactly. Anyone having the necessary feeling of confidence might turn to someone who was experienced in these matters and ask what would be the best kind of thought to which he might devote himself in this way. This person would then suggest some thought which could be surveyed with ease but which would at the same time be as

new to him as possible. If we use an old familiar thought, it is very easy for all kinds of memories and feelings and subjective impressions to arise out of the soul, so that only a dreamy condition would be induced. But if the enquirer is directed to a thought which is quite certainly a new one, which will arouse no memories, then he will be able to give himself up to it in such a way that the thought-forces of the soul will become stronger and stronger. In my own writings, and especially in my books — *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and *An Outline Of Occult Science*, I call this kind of thinking, which can be inwardly cultivated, *Meditation*. That is an old word: but to-day we will only use it in the particular connection which I will now describe. Meditation consists in turning the attention away from everything that has been either an inner or an external experience, and in thinking of nothing except that one thought, which must be placed in the very centre of the soul's life. By thus directing all the strength that the soul possesses upon this single thought something takes place with regard to the forces of the soul which can only be compared to the constant repetitions of some movement of the hand. What is it that takes place there? The muscles become stronger. It is exactly similar in the case of the soul's powers. When they are directed again and again to one thought they gain force and strength. And if this goes on for a long time — (though to spend a long time at it on each occasion is certainly not necessary, because it is rather a question of entering into a state of soul produced by

concentration on a single thought) — and the length of time depends also on predisposition, for with one person it might take a week, and with another three years, and so on — so, if we go on for a long period doing such exercises again and again perhaps for five minutes or fifteen minutes every day, then we begin at last to have an inner sense that our being is becoming enfilled with a new content of force.

Previously, the forces of the nerves have been felt in the process of ordinary thinking and feeling as we feel the forces of the muscles active in the grasping of objects or in whatever we perform. Just as we have been feeling these things gradually more and more in growing up from childhood, so in the same way we gradually begin to learn how to feel that something new is permeating us when we apply ourselves to such thought-exercises — of which I can now only indicate the general principles. (You will find them described in greater detail in my books). Finally there comes a day when we are aware that we can no longer think about outer things in the same way as we used to think about them; but that now we have attained an entirely new soul-power; that we have something in us that is like an intensified, a stronger quality of thinking. And at last we feel that this kind of thinking enables us actually to take hold of what previously was only known to us in quite a shadowy way.

What we are then enabled to grasp is the essential reality of

our own life. In what manner do we thus recognize our own earthly life — the life we have lived since birth? We know it through our memory, which reaches back as far as a certain point in our childhood. Rising out of undefined depths of the soul appears the remembrance of our past experiences. They are like shadows. Think how shadowy those emerging memory pictures of our life are in comparison with the intense, full-blooded experiences we have from day to day! If we now take hold of our thinking in the way that I have described, the shadowy quality of these memories ceases. We go back into our own actual earth-life; we experience again what we experienced ten or twenty years ago with the same inner forces and strength with which we originally experienced these events. Only the experience is not the same as formerly, inasmuch as we do not again come into direct contact with the external objects or beings, but we experience instead a kind of “extract” of it all. And that which we experience can, paradoxical as it may sound, be described as having definite significance. All at once, as in a mighty panorama, we have the whole of our life up to the time of birth before us. Not that we see the single events simply in a time-sequence, but we see them as a complete life-tableau. Time turns into Space. Our experiences are there before us, not as ordinary memories, but so that we know that we stand before the deeper being of our own humanity — like a second man within the man we know with our ordinary consciousness.

And then we arrive at the following: This physical human being that we confront in our ordinary consciousness is built up out of the matter which we take out of the Earth which is round about us. We continually discard this matter, and take in fresh matter, and we can definitely say that all the material substances which have been discarded by our body are replaced by new substances within periods of time of from seven to eight years. The material in us is something that is in constant flux. And so, learning to know our own life through our intensified thinking, we come to know that which remains — which endures throughout the whole of our earth-life. It is, at the same time, that which builds up our organism out of outer material substance; and this latter is itself at the same time that which we survey as the tableau of our life.

Now what we see in this manner is distinguished in yet another way from ordinary memory. In ordinary memory the events of our life appear before the soul as though approaching us from outside. We remember what such and such a person has done to us, or what has accrued to us from this or that event. But in the tableau which arises from our intensified thinking, we learn to know ourselves as we really are ourselves — what we have done to other human beings, how we have stood in relation to any occurrence. We learn to know ourselves. That is the important point. For in learning to know ourselves, we also learn to know ourselves intensively, and in such a way that we know how we are placed within the

forces of our growth, yes, even within the forces of our nourishment; and how it is we ourselves who build up and again disintegrate our own bodies. Thus we learn to know our own inner being.

Now the important thing is that when we come to this self-knowledge, we immediately experience something which can never be experienced by means of any ordinary science or through the ordinary consciousness. I must admit that nowadays it is really very difficult to express what is now arrived at, because in face of what is considered authoritative to-day, it sounds so strange. But so it is. At this point we experience something through our intensified thinking, of which we must say the following: — There are the laws of Nature which we study assiduously in the sciences; we even learn about them in the elementary schools. We are proud of this; and prosaic humanity is justly proud of what has been learnt of these laws of Nature in physics, chemistry and so on. Here I must emphatically declare that Anthroposophy does not set itself in any amateurish opposition to Science. But because of our grasp of inner, intensive thinking we say that the natural laws which are learnt in connection with physics and chemistry are only present in the matter of the Earth, and they cease to be of any account so soon as we pass out into universal space.

Here I must state something which will not seem so very

unplausible to anyone who thinks over it without prejudice: suppose we have somewhere a source of light, we know that the more widely the light is distributed from its source the more it loses in intensity; and the further we go out into space the weaker it becomes, so that we are tempted to speak of it no longer as ‘light’ but as ‘twilight,’ and finally when we have gone far enough it cannot be accounted as light any more. It is the same with the laws of Nature. They have a value for the region of the Earth, but the further we go out into the Cosmos they become less and less of value, until at length they cease to be of any account at all as laws of Nature. On the other hand, those laws which we come to apprehend through intensified thinking, which are already active in our own life, these show us that as human beings, we have not grown out of the natural laws of the Earth, but out of higher, cosmic laws. We have brought them with us in coming into earthly existence. And so we learn to recognize that the moment we have grasped our intensified thinking we can only apply natural law to the mineral kingdom. We cannot say — and this is a very reasonable error made by the newer physics — that natural laws can be applied to the Sun or the Stars. That cannot be done; for to wish to apply natural laws to the Universe would be just as artless as to wish to illumine the world of space with the light of a candle. Directly we ascend from the mineral, which as mineral is only apparent to us on this Earth, up to what is living, then we can no longer speak of the natural laws of the earthly realm, but we must speak of

laws which worked down into the earthly realm from out of the Cosmos — from universal space. That is already the case with regard to the vegetable kingdom.

We can only use the laws of the Earth to explain the mineral-laws, for example, such as the law of gravity and so on, which work from the centre of the Earth towards the circumference. When we come to the vegetable kingdom, then we must say that the entire globe is the central point, and that the laws of life are working towards it from every side of the Cosmos — the same laws of life which we have first discovered in ourselves with our intensified thinking, and of which we have learnt to know that we build ourselves up between birth and death by their means.

To these laws, then, which work from the centre of the Earth outward, we add knowledge of the laws which work inwards towards the centre of the Earth from every direction, and which are already active in the vegetable kingdom. We look at the plants springing up out of the Earth and tell ourselves that they contain mineral matter. Chemistry to-day has gone very far in its knowledge of the respective activity of these mineral substances. That is all quite justifiable and quite right. And chemistry will go yet further. That will also be quite right. But if we want to explain the nature of plants we must explain their growth and that cannot be done through the forces that work upwards from the Earth, but only through

those forces that work inwards from the surroundings, from the Cosmos, into the Earth-existence. Hence we have to admit that our knowledge must ascend from an earthly conception to a cosmic conception; and moreover in this cosmic conception is contained the real human Self-knowledge.

Now we can go further than this and transform our *Feeling*. To have ‘Feeling’ in ordinary life is a personal affair, not actually a source of knowledge. But we can transform that which is ordinarily only experienced subjectively as feeling, into a real objective source of knowledge.

In Meditation we concentrate upon one particular thought; we arrive at intensified or ‘substantial’ thinking and thereby are able to grasp something that works from the periphery of the Universe towards the centre of the Earth, in contradistinction to the ordinary laws of Nature, which work from the centre of the Earth outwards in all directions. So when we have reached this intensified thinking, and have perceived that our own life and also the life of the plants is spread out before our souls like a mighty panorama, then we go further. We come to a point, after having grasped something through this forceful thinking, when we can cast these strong thoughts aside. Anyone who knows how difficult it is, in ordinary life, to throw aside some thought which has taken hold of one, will understand that special exercises are

necessary to enable this to be done. But it can be done. It is not only possible to cast out with the whole strength of our soul this thought that we have concentrated upon, but it is also possible to cast out the whole memory-tableau, and therewith our own life, and entirely to withdraw our attention from it.

Something then begins to occur by which we clearly see that we are descending further into the depths of the soul, into those regions which are usually only accessible to our feeling. As a rule in ordinary life, if all impressions received by sight or hearing are shut off, we fall asleep. But if we have developed intensified thinking, we do not fall asleep even when we have thrown aside every thought — even the substantially intense ones. A condition arises in which no sense-perceptions and no thoughts are active, a condition we can only describe by saying that such a person is simply ‘awake;’ he does not fall asleep; but he has nevertheless at first nothing in his consciousness. He is awake, with a consciousness that is empty. That is a condition revealed through Spiritual Science to which a person can attain who can be quite systematically and methodically developed — namely to have an empty consciousness in complete waking awareness.

In the usual way, if our consciousness is empty we are asleep. For from falling asleep to waking up we do have an empty consciousness — only — we are asleep in it. To have

an empty consciousness and yet be awake, is the second stage of knowledge for which we strive. For this consciousness does not remain empty for long. It fills itself. As the ordinary consciousness can fill itself with colour through the perceptions of sight, or by the ear fill itself with sounds, so this empty consciousness fills itself with a spiritual world which is just as much in our surroundings ‘there’ as the ordinary physical world is in our surroundings here. The empty consciousness is the first to reveal the spiritual world — that spiritual world which is neither here on the Earth, nor in the Cosmos in Space, but which is outside Space and Time, and which nevertheless constitutes our deepest human nature. For if at first we have learnt to look back with the intense consciousness of thinking upon our whole earth-life as a script — now, with a consciousness that was empty and has become filled, we gaze into that world where we passed a life of soul-and-spirit before we came down into our earthly existence. We now learn to know ourselves as Beings who were spiritually present before birth and conception, who lived a pre-earthly existence before the one wherein we now are. We learn to recognize ourselves as beings of spirit-and-soul, and that the body that we bear we have received in that it was handed on to us by parents and grandparents. We have had it delivered to us in such a way that, as I have said, we can change it every seven years; but that which we are in our individual being has brought itself to Earth out of a pre-natal existence. But none of this is learnt by means of theorising, or

by subtle cogitation; it can only be learnt when the suitable capacities are first of all unfolded in intellectual modesty.

Thus we have now learnt to know our inner humanity, our own individual being of spirit-and-soul. It comes to meet us when we descend into the region of feeling and not merely with feeling, but also with knowledge. But first we must mark how the struggle for knowledge is bound up with strong inner experiences which can be indicated as follows: If you have bound up one of your limbs tightly, so that you cannot move it — even if someone perhaps only bandages two of your fingers together — you feel discomfort, possibly even pain. Now when you are in a condition where you experience what is soul-and-spirit without a body, you do not possess the whole of your physical being, for you are living in an empty consciousness. The passing-over into this state is connected with a profound feeling of pain. Beyond the feeling of pain, beyond the privation, we wrestle for the entrance into that which is our deepest spiritual and soul-being. And here many people are arrested by terror. But it is impossible to gain any explanation of our real human nature by any other means; and if we can learn it in this way, then we can go still further.

But now we have to develop a strength of knowledge which in ordinary life is not recognised as such at all; we have to develop *Love* as a force of knowledge — a selfless out-going into the things and processes of the world. And if we perfect

this Love ever more and more, so that we can actually lift ourselves out into the condition I have described, where we are body-free — and in this liberation from the body gaze at the world — then we learn to realise ourselves wholly as spiritual beings in the spiritual world. Then we know what man is as Spirit; but then we also know what dying is; for in Death man lays his physical body altogether aside. In this knowledge, which as a third form, is experienced through the deepening of Love, we learn to know ourselves outside our body; we accomplish separation from it by the constructive quality of knowledge.

From this moment we know what it will mean when we lay aside our body in this Earth-existence and go through the Gate of Death. We learn to know death. But we also learn to know the life of the soul-and-spirit on the other side of death. Now we know the spiritual-soul-being of man as it will be after death. As at first we had learnt to recognize our being as it is before the descent into earthly life, so now we know the continuation of the life of this being in the world of soul-and-spirit after death.

Then something else occurs which causes us to mark clearly how imperfect is the consciousness of to-day; for it speaks of ‘immortality,’ out of its hope and faith. But immortality — deathlessness — is only one half of Eternity — namely the everlasting continuation of the present point of

time. We have to-day no word such as was to be found in the degrees of knowledge of an older time, which points to an immortality in the other half of Eternity — ‘unborn-ness.’

Because just as man is deathless, so is he also unborn; that is to say, with birth he steps out of the spiritual world into physical existence, just as at death he passes from the physical world into a spiritual existence. Therefore in this manner we learn of the true being of man, which is spiritual, and which goes through birth and death; and only then are we in a position to comprehend our whole being.

The principles which I have briefly outlined have already formed the content of a wealth of literature, which has imbibed a conscientiousness and a responsibility towards its knowledge out of the realm of exact Science, on which alone this sense of responsibility can rest to-day. So we attain to a Spiritual Science, which has grown out of ordinary Science.

And just on account of this, we learn something else — namely how life consists of two tendencies or streams. People speak in a general way to-day about development; they say the child is small — it develops — it grows; it is full of energy — strong — it blossoms with life. They say that a lower form of life has evolved to a higher; — quickening, blooming life — growing ever more and more complicated! And that is right. But this stream of life is there, however, in opposition to

another stream, which is present in every sentient living being — namely, a destructive tendency. Just as we have a budding and sprouting life in us, integrating life — so we have also the life of disintegration. Through knowledge such as this we perceive that we cannot merely say that our life streams up into the brain and nervous system and that this matter organises itself so that the nervous system can become the bearer of the life of the soul. No — it is not like that. The life is germinating and sprouting, but at the same time there is continual destruction incorporated into it.

Our life is incessantly going to pieces … the blossoming life is always giving place to the decaying life. We are actually dying by degrees and at every moment something falls to ruin in us, and every time we build it up again. But, whereas matter is being destroyed, it leaves room wherein what is of the soul-and-spirit can enter and become active in us. And here we touch upon the great error made by materialism, for materialism believes that the sprouting and budding life evolves up to the nervous system in man so that the nerves are built up in the same way as the muscles are built up out of the blood. It is true they are. But no thinking is developed by means of building up the nerves; neither is feeling. On the contrary, in that the nerves decay to a certain extent, the psychic-spiritual incorporates itself into what is decaying. We must first disintegrate matter in order that the psychic-spiritual can appear in us and enable us to experience it for ourselves.

That will be the great moment in the development of a rightly-understood Natural Science, when the opposite to evolution will be recognized as carrying evolution forward at the corresponding point; when it will recognize not only integration, but also disintegration — thus admitting not only evolution but devolution. And thus it will be understood how the spiritual in the animal and in man — but in the latter in a self-conscious way — takes hold of the material. The spiritual does not take hold of the material because the latter is developing itself against it, but because matter, by a contrary process, is destroying itself; and the spiritual comes into evidence, the spiritual reveals itself, in this process. Therefore we are filled with the spirit; for it is everywhere present in devolution but not in evolution, which is *Earth*-development. Then we learn to observe that man as he stands before us in his entirety, is as though contained within a polar antithesis, Everywhere, in every single organ, wherever there is an upbuilding process there is also a destructive process going on. If we look at any one of the organs, it may be the liver, or the lungs, or the heart, we see that it is in a constant stream which consists of integration — disintegration, integration — disintegration. Is it not really rather an extraordinary expression that we use when we say for example ‘Here flows the Rhine?’ What is ‘the Rhine?’ When we say ‘Here flows the Rhine,’ we do not as a rule mean that there is the river bed ‘Rhine,’ but we mean the flowing water which we look at. Yet it is different every moment. The Rhine has been there a

hundred years, a thousand years. But what is it which is there every moment? It is what is realised as being in alteration every moment in the flowing stream. In the same way, everything that we contain is held within a stream of change, in integration and disintegration, and in its disintegration it becomes the bearer of the spiritual. And so in every normal human being there exists a state of balance between anabolism and catabolism, and in this balance he develops the right capacity for the soul-and-spirit. Nevertheless, this balance can be disturbed, and can be disturbed to such an extent that some organ or other may have its correct degree of anabolism in relation to too slight a degree of catabolism, and then its growth becomes rampant. Or contrariwise, some organ may have a normal process of disintegration against too slight an anabolism, in which case the organ becomes disturbed, or atrophies; and thus we pass out of the physiological sphere into the pathological.

Only when we can discern what this condition of balance signifies, can we also discern how it may be disturbed by an excess of either integrating or disintegrating forces. But when we recognize this, then we can turn our gaze to the great outer world, and can find there what, under certain conditions, will act so as to equalise these two processes.

Suppose we take for example a human organ that is disturbed by reason of too strong a destructive process, and

then look with sight made clear by spiritual-scientific knowledge at something outside in Nature, say at a plant; we shall know that in a particular plant there are anabolic — building-up — properties. Now it becomes apparent that in the habit of certain plants there are always anabolic properties and that these correspond precisely to the anabolic forces of human organs. Thus, we can discover — when we make use of these conceptions which have now been developed by me — that there are anabolic forces in the kidneys. Let us suppose the kidneys are too weak, that their destructive forces are excessive. We turn to the plants, and we find in the common horsetail, *Equisetum arvense*, anabolic forces which exactly correspond to those which belong to the kidneys. If we make a preparation from equisetum and administer it through the digestive process into the blood-circulation and thus conduct it in the right way to the region in the body where it can work, we strengthen the debilitated anabolic forces of the kidneys. And so we can proceed with all the organs. Once we have grasped this knowledge we have the possibility of bringing back into a condition of balance the unbalanced processes of integration and disintegration by using the forces which can be found in the outside world. If on the other hand we have to deal with forces of anabolism either in the kidneys or elsewhere which have become over-strong, then it will be necessary to reinforce the destructive processes. In this case we must have recourse to the lower type of plants, let us say the fern species, which have this property.

In this way we pass beyond the point of mere experiment and test in order to discover whether a preparation will be beneficial or not. We can look into the human organism in respect of the relative balance of the organs themselves; we can penetratingly survey Nature for the discovery of the anabolic and catabolic forces, and thus we make the Art of Healing into something wherein we can really see that a remedy is not administered just because statistics confirm that in such and such cases it is useful — but because by a really penetrating survey both of the human being and Nature we know with exactitude in every case the natural process in a Nature-product that can be transformed into a healing factor — that is, for the human organs in respect of the anabolic and catabolic forces.

I do not mean to say that in recent times Medicine has not made immense progress. Anthroposophy recognises this progress in Medicine to the full. Neither have we any wish to exclude what modern medical science has accomplished; on the contrary we honour it. But when we examine what has been brought out in the way of remedies in recent times we find that they have only been arrived at by way of lengthy experimentation. Anthroposophy supplies a penetrating knowledge which by its survey of human nature has fully proved itself in those spheres where Medicine has already been so happily successful. But in addition to this, Anthroposophy offers a whole series of new remedies also, a

fact which is made possible by the same insight applied to both Nature and Man.

Therefore if we learn to look into the human being spiritually in this way — (and I will later show how the Art of Healing can be made fruitful in every single sphere through a true knowledge of the spirit) — we also learn to look into the spiritual life together with the material life, and then we arrive — and this no longer in the old dreamlike way which had its overflow in Mythology, but in an exact way — then we can arrive at a bringing together of perfectly rational knowledge with a ‘message’ of Healing.

Man learns to heal by means of a real and artistic conception of an art that has grown out of the world itself. Therewith we come again into touch with what existed in ancient times — though it was not then to be found in the way in which we to-day must aspire to find it now that we have the great wealth of Science behind us; — for what existed in ancient times through a kind of dreamlike knowledge, can lead us to-day to the application of forces and spiritual forces in connection with human health and sickness.

In ancient times there were the Mystery Centres in which a knowledge was cultivated which could solve humanity’s religious problems and satisfy the longings of the soul; and in connection with the Mysteries there were places of Healing.

To-day, quite rightly, we regard the things that were cultivated there as somewhat childish. But there was nevertheless a sound kernel in them; — it was known that the knowledge of the so-called normal world must go forward into knowledge of the abnormal world. Is it not strange that we, on the other hand, say that in his healthy state man comes forth out of Nature, and that then we have to explain the unhealthy man also by the laws of Nature? For every illness can be explained by these laws. Does Nature then contradict herself? We shall see that she does not do so with regard to disease. But our knowledge must be a continuation from the normal physical into the pathological. Knowledge can attain value for life only in so far as that side by side with those places where the normal aspects of life are cultivated, there must also be found those that are concerned with the illnesses of life.

There was to have been a centre of knowledge at the Goetheanum at Dornach in Switzerland, in the building which most unfortunately was burnt down, but which we hope will soon be rebuilt. It was to be a centre of knowledge where mankind would have been able to satisfy those longings of the soul which seek to penetrate into the sources of life. And out of what I might call a natural sequence it came to be regarded as a matter of course that there should be added to the Goetheanum a centre of Healing. True, this could only be, at first, of a modest kind. Such a thing must be there wherever there is to be a real knowledge of humanity. And we have it in

the Clinical-Therapeutical Institute at Arlesheim which is the result of the efforts of Frau Dr. Wegman, and which has been followed by the founding of a similar Institute under Dr. Zeylmans van Emmichoven at The Hague. And so at Dornach there is established once again, side by side with the centre of Knowledge, a centre of Healing. And whereas courage must always be a part of everything that pertains to knowledge of the Spirit, so courage belongs above all things, to the way of Healing. This vital element lives in that Institute at Arlesheim — the courage to heal; in order that all which comes forth out of the whole human being as the possibility to control the forces of healing, may be used as a blessing for humanity. Therefore, such a centre of Knowledge, which once more strives towards the Mysteries — albeit in the modern sense — and where the great questions of existence are dealt with, must have beside it, even though it may be only in a modest way, a centre of Healing where knowledge of the smallest details of life is cultivated and where the effort is made to deepen the Art of Healing in a spiritual sense.

In the external nearness of Knowledge-Centre and Healing-Centre to one another we have the outer image of how close a connection should exist between Anthroposophical knowledge and the practical work of Healing, and that this should exist as such a spiritual Art that out of a conception of conditions of illness in the human being, there should grow a conception of Therapeutics, of Healing, so that the two may

not fall asunder, but that the diagnostic process may be carried on into the healing process. The aim of Anthroposophy herein is that while one makes a diagnosis in the knowledge one has of what is happening in a person when he is ill, at the same moment one sees that such and such a thing is taking place, or something is happening in the anabolic processes. One then recognizes Nature for example in occurrences brought about by destructive forces; one knows where the destructive forces are to be found, and in administering these as a healing agent one is thus able to act so that these destructive forces can work against the upbuilding forces in the human being. And vice versa. So one is able to perceive clearly in what is going on in the human being, an unhealthy condition; but even in perceiving this unhealthy condition one immediately perceives also the nature of the working of the healing agent.

To-day I wished only to demonstrate the nature of a spiritual way of knowledge, and point out that the effect of this spiritual knowledge is such that man does not merely approach natural and spiritual forces in a theoretical way, but that he also learns to handle them, and out of his spiritual learning to mould life.

With advancing civilisation, life becomes continually more and more complicated. At the present time a longing is dominating the subconscious life of many souls — a longing

to find what may be the source out of which this more and more complicated life has grown. Anthroposophy tries above all to assuage these longings. And we shall see that against much that is destructive in the life of to-day it honestly desires to co-operate in all that is constructive, that is advancing, that tends to prosperity in our civilisation — not with helpless phrases but actively, in all the practical questions of life. Anthroposophy wishes knowledge everywhere to flow into life, to give knowledge in a form which can help wherever help is needed in the affairs of life.

Lecture2

IN the last lecture I tried to point out how by means of the kind of knowledge cultivated by Anthroposophy, man may be seen in his whole nature — consisting of body, soul and spirit. I tried to show also how an inner knowledge of the conditions of health and disease can only be arrived at when the entire nature of man can be perceived in this way; and how in learning to know the true connections between the things which take place within man and the external processes and conditions of substances in Nature, we also succeed in establishing a connecting link between pathology and therapy.

Our next task will be to explain in detail what was only given in general outline in the first lecture. And for this it will above all be necessary to observe how disintegration is proceeding

in the human organism and how, on the other hand, there is a constant process of integration. Man has, to begin with, an external physical organisation which is perceptible by means of the outer senses, and whose manifestations can be comprehended by the reason. Besides this physical body there is also the first super-sensible body of the human being: the *ether body*, or life body. These two principles of the constitution of man serve to build up (integrate) the human organisation. The physical body is continually renewed as it casts off its substance. The ether body — which contains the forces of growth and of assimilation — is, in the entirety of its constitution, something of which we can gain a conception when we behold the growing and blossoming plant-kingdom in the spring; for the plants, as well as human beings, have an ether, or life body. In these two members of the human organisation we have a progressive, constructive evolution.

In so far as man is a sentient being, he bears within himself the next member, the *astral body*. (We need not feel that such terms are objectionable; we should perceive what they reveal to us). The astral body is essentially the mediator of sensation, the bearer of the inner life of feeling. The astral body contains not only the upbuilding forces but also the forces of destruction. Just as the ether body makes the being of man bud and sprout, as it were, so all these processes of budding are continually being disintegrated again by the astral body; and just because of this, just because the physical and

etheric bodies are continually being disintegrated, there exists in the human organisation an activity of *soul-and-spirit*.

It would be quite a mistake to suppose that the soul-and-spirit in man's nature inhere in the upbuilding process and that this process at last reaches a certain point — let us say in the nervous system — where it can become the bearer of soul-and-spirit. That is not the case. When eventually (and everything points to this being soon), our very admirable modern scientific research has made further progress, it will become apparent that an anabolic, a constructive process in the nervous system is not the essential thing; it is present in the nervous organisation merely in order that the nerves may, in fact, exist. But the nerve-process is in a continual, though slow state of dissolution; and because it is so, because the physical is always being dissolved, a place is set free for the spirit-and-soul.

In a still higher degree is this the case as regards the actual Ego-organisation, by means of which man is raised above all the other beings of Nature surrounding him on the Earth. The Ego-organisation is essentially bound up with katabolism; it is of greatest moment in those parts of the human being that are in a state of disintegration.

So when we look into this wonderful form of the human organism, we see that in every single organ there is

construction, integration (whereby the organ ministers to growth and progressive development), and also destruction, whereby it ministers to retrogressive physical development, and by so doing gives foothold for the soul-and-spirit. I said in the last lecture that the state of balance between integration and disintegration which is present in a particular way in every human organ, can be disturbed. The upbuilding process can become rampant; in that case we have to do with an unhealthy condition. When we look in this way into the nature of the human being (to begin with I can only state these things rather abstractly; they will be expressed more concretely presently), when we proceed conscientiously, with a sense of scientific responsibility and do not talk in generalisations about the presence of integration and disintegration, but really study each individual organ as conscientiously as we have learnt to do in scientific observations to-day — then we shall be able to penetrate into this condition of balance that is necessary for the single organs and so find it possible to obtain a conception of the human being in health. If in either direction, either with respect to constructive or with respect to destructive processes, the balance of an organ is upset, then we have to do with something that is unhealthy in the human organism.

Now, however, we must discover how this human organism stands in relation to the three kingdoms of Nature in the outer world — the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms — from

which we have of course to extract our remedies. When we have studied this inner state of balance in the manner described, we shall see how everything that is present in the three kingdoms of Nature outside man is, in every direction, being overcome within the human organism.

Let us take the simplest example: — the condition of warmth in man. Nothing of the outer conditions of warmth must be carried on unchanged when it is once within the human organism. When we investigate the manifestations of warmth outside in Nature, we know that warmth raises the temperature of things in the outer world. We say that warmth penetrates into things. If we, in our organisation, were to be penetrated in the same way by warmth we should be made ill by it. It is only when, through the forces and quality of our organisation we are able to receive this warmth-process which is being exercised upon us, into our organism and immediately transform it into an inner process, that our organisation is in a state of health. We are harmed by either heat or cold directly we are not in a position to receive it into our organisation and transform it.

In respect of warmth or cold, everyone can see this quite easily for himself. Moreover the same holds good for all other Nature processes. Only careful study, sharpened by spiritual perception, can lead to the recognition that every process taking place in Nature is transformed, metamorphosed, when

it occurs within the human organism. We are indeed incessantly overcoming what lives in our earthly environment.

If we now consider the whole internal organisation of man we must say that if the inner force of the human being which inwardly transforms the external events and processes that are always working in upon him — for example, when he is taking nourishment — if this force were removed, then all that enters man from outside would work as a foreign process, and in a sense — if I were to express it crudely or trivially — man would be filled with foreign bodies or foreign processes. On the other hand, if the higher members of man's being, the astral body and the Ego-organisation develop excessive strength, then he does not only so transform the outer processes of his environment that enter into him as they should be transformed, but he does so more rampantly. Then there is a speeding-up of the processes which penetrate him. External Nature is driven out beyond the human — becomes in a certain sense, over-spiritualised; and we are faced with a disturbance of the health.

What has thus been indicated as an abstract principle is really present in every human organ and must be studied individually in the case of them all. Moreover the human being is related in a highly complicated manner, to all the different ways in which he transforms the external processes.

He who strives to get beyond the undisputed testimony of up-to-date anatomy and physiology, who tries to develop his understanding so that he can transform the conception of the human organism yielded by a study of the corpse or pathological conditions, observing them not merely in regard to their “dead” structures but according to their living nature, will find himself faced with endless enigmas of the human organism. For the more exact and the more living our knowledge becomes, the more complicated does it appear. There are, however, certain guiding lines which enable us to find our way through the labyrinth. And if I may be allowed to make a personal observation here, it is that the discovery of such guiding lines was a matter with which I occupied myself for thirty years before I began to speak about it openly — which was about the year 1917. As a comparatively young man, in the early twenties, I asked myself whether there was any possibility of research into this complicated human organisation. Were there certain fundamental principles which would enable one to arrive at a comprehensive understanding? And this led me — (I have just said that the study took me thirty years) — to the fact that one can regard the human organisation from three different aspects: the *system of nerves and senses*, the *rhythmic system*, and the *metabolic and limb system*.

What we can call the organisation of nerves and senses predominates over all the others. It is, moreover, the bearer of

all that can be described as the life of concepts. On the other hand, what we describe as the rhythmic organisation is, in a certain respect, self-contained. There is the rhythm of the breath, the rhythm of the circulation, the rhythm manifested in sleeping and waking, and countless other rhythmic processes. It was by making a practical and accurate distinction between the rhythmic organisation and the nerves-and-senses organisation that I first discovered how one could distinguish between the different constituent parts of the human being. I was compelled to ask myself the question — it is now nearly forty years ago, and to-day human hearts are more than ever burdened with baffling physiological problems — I was compelled to ask myself whether on this basis it is really possible to say that the whole inner life of thinking, feeling and willing is bound up with the system of nerves and senses. At the same time I felt that there was a contradiction: how can thinking, feeling and willing be bound up with the nerves and senses? Naturally I cannot go into all this detail to-day, I can only indicate it; but when we come to consider the domain of therapeutics much will be explained. For instance, direction: the nervous system and the metabolic system are polarically opposite. As the metabolic-limb-system builds up, so the system of nerves and senses destroys and vice versa. This and many other things demonstrate the polarity. Everything that constitutes the Ego-organisation is intimately bound up with the system of nerves and senses; everything that constitutes the ether body is intimately bound up with the

metabolic and limb system; everything that constitutes the astral body is bound up with the rhythmic system; the physical body permeates the whole, but is continually overcome by the three other members of the human organisation. Only when we observe the human organism in this way can we learn to penetrate into the so-called normal or abnormal processes.

Let us take first the organisation of nerves and senses. But first, so that I may not be misunderstood, I would like to make a short digression. A very sceptical naturalist who had heard in quite a superficial way about these members which I posit as the basis of man's nature, said that I had attempted to distinguish between 'head-organisation,' 'chest-organisation,' and 'abdominal organisation'; thus that I had in a sense located the system of nerves and senses only in the head, the rhythmic organisation in the chest, and the metabolic-limb system in the abdomen. But that is a very unjust statement. For without separating the systems spatially, the nerves and senses may be said to be organised principally in the head, but they are also to be found in the other two systems. The rhythmic system is principally located in the middle organisation; but it again is spread over the whole man; similarly the metabolic organisation. It is not a question of making a spatial separation between the organs, but of understanding their qualitative aspect and what is living in and permeating the single organs.

When we study the system of nerves and senses from this standpoint, we find that it spreads throughout the whole organism. The eye or the ear, for example, are organised in such a way that they pre-eminently contain the nerves and senses, in a lesser degree the rhythmic, and in a still less degree the metabolic system. An organ like the kidney, for instance, does not contain so much of the nerves-and-senses system as of the rhythmic or metabolic organisation, yet it contains something of all three. We do not understand the human being if we say: here are sense-organs, or there are digestive organs. In reality it is quite different. A sense-organ is only principally sense-organ; every sense-organ is also in a certain way a digestive and a rhythmic organ. The kidneys or the liver are to be understood as being principally assimilatory or excretory organs. In a lesser degree they are organs of nerves and senses. If, then, we study the whole organisation of man with its single organs from the point of view of the system of nerves-and-senses (in its reality, and not according to the fantastic concepts often formed by physiology), we find that man ‘perceives’ by means of his separate senses — sight, hearing and so on; but we also find that he is entirely permeated by the sense-organisation. The kidney, for instance, is a sense-organ which has a delicate perception of what is taking place in the digestive and excretory processes. The liver too, is — under certain conditions — a sense-organ. The heart is in a high degree an inner sense-organ and can only be understood if it is conceived of as such.

Do not imagine that I have any intention of criticising the science of to-day; I know its worth and my desire is that our view of these things shall be firmly grounded upon it. But we must nevertheless be clear that our science is, at present, not able to penetrate fully and with exactitude into the being of man. If it could, it would not relate the animal organisation so closely to the human in the way it does in our time. In respect of the life of sense, the animal stands at a lower level than the human organisation. The human nerves-and-senses organisation is yoked to the Ego-organisation; in the animal it is yoked to the astral body. The sense-life of man is entirely different from that of the animal. When the animal perceives something with its eyes — and this can be shown by a closer study of the structure of the eye — something takes place in the animal which, so to say, goes through the whole of its body. It does not happen like that in man. In man, sense-perception remains far more at the periphery, is concentrated far more on the surface. You can understand from this that there are delicate organisations present in animals which, in the case of the higher species, are only to be found in etheric form. But in certain of the lower animals you find, for instance, the xiphoid process which is also present in higher animals but in their case it is etheric; or you may find the pecten or choroid process in the eye. The way in which these organs are permeated by the blood, shows that the eye shares in the whole organisation of the animal and is the mediator to it of a life in the circumference of its environment. Man, on the other

hand, is connected with his system of nerves-and-senses quite differently and therefore lives, in a far higher sense than the animal, in his outer world, whereas the animal lives more within itself. But everything which is communicated through the higher spiritual members of the human being, which lives itself out through the Ego-organisation by way of the nerves and senses, requires — just because it is present within the domain of the physical body — to receive its material influences from out of the physical world.

Now if we closely study the system of nerves-and-senses at a time when it is functioning perfectly healthily, we find that its working depends on a certain substance, and on the processes that take place in that substance. Matter is something which is never at rest; it merely represents what is, actually, a 'process.' (A crystal of quartz, for instance, is only a self-contained, definitely shaped thing to us because we never perceive that it is a 'process,' though indeed it is one which is taking place extremely slowly.) We must penetrate further and further into the human organism and learn to understand its transformative activity. That which enters into the organism as external physical substance has to be taken up by it and overcome, in the way described in the introductory lecture.

Now it is especially interesting that when the system of nerves-and-senses is in a normal, *i.e.*, a healthy state (which

must of course be understood relatively), it is dependent upon a delicate process which takes place under the influence of the *silicic acid* which enters the organism. Silicic acid, which in the outer realm of Nature forms itself into beautiful quartz-crystals, has this peculiarity:

when it penetrates into the human organism it is taken up by the processes of the nerves and senses; so that if we look at the system of nerves-and-senses with spiritual sight, we see a wonderfully delicate process going on in which silicic acid is active. But if we look at the other side of the question — as when I said that man has senses everywhere — then we shall notice that it is only in the periphery, that is, where the senses are especially concentrated, that the silicic acid process is intensified; when we turn to the more inner parts of the organism, to the lungs, liver or kidneys, it is far less strong, it is ‘thinner;’ while in the bones it is again stronger. In this way we discover that man has a remarkable constitution.

We have, so to say, a periphery and a circumference where the senses are concentrated; then we have that which fills out the limbs and which carries the skeleton; between these we have the muscles, the glands and so on.

In that which I have described as the ‘circumference’ and the ‘centralised,’ we have the strongest silicic acid processes; we can follow them into the organs that lie between these two,

and there we find that they have their own specific silicic acid processes but weaker than those in the circumference. Thus in respect of the outer parts, where man extends in an outgoing direction from the nerves into the senses, he needs more and more silicic acid; in the centre of his system he requires comparatively little; but where his skeleton lies, at the basis of the motor system, there again he requires more silicic acid. Directly we perceive this fact we recognize the inexactitude of many assertions of modern physiology. (And again let me emphasise that I do not wish to criticise them, but merely to make certain statements.) For instance, if we study the life of the human being according to modern physiology, we are directed to the breathing-process. In certain respects this is a complex process, but — speaking generally — it consists in taking in oxygen out of the air, and breathing out carbonic acid. That is the rhythmical process which is essentially the basis of organic life. We say that oxygen is breathed in, that it goes through certain processes described by physiology, within the organism; that it combines with carbon in the blood, and is then ejected on the breath as carbonic acid. This is perfectly correct according to a purely external method of observation. This process is, however, connected with another. We do not merely breathe in oxygen and combine it with carbon. Primarily, that is done with that portion of the oxygen which is spread over the lower part of the body; that is what we unite with the carbon and breathe out as carbonic acid.

There is another and a more delicate process behind this rhythmical occurrence. That portion of the oxygen which, in the human organisation, rises towards the head and therefore (in the particular sense which was mentioned previously) to the system of nerves-and-senses, unites itself with the substance we call silica, and forms silicic acid. And whereas in man the important thing for the metabolic system is the production of carbonic acid, so the important thing for the nerves-and-senses system is the production of silicic acid. The latter is a finer process which we are not able to verify with the coarse instruments at our disposal, though all the means are there by which it can be verified. Thus we have the coarser process on the one hand, and on the other the finer process where the oxygen combines with the silica to form silicic acid, and as such, is secreted inwardly in the human organisation.

Through this secretion of silicic acid the whole organism becomes a sense-organ — more so in the periphery, less so in the separate organs.

If we look at it this way, we can perceive the more delicate intimate structure of the human organism, and see how every organ contains, of necessity, processes related to substances each in its own distinct degree.

If we are now to grasp what health and illness really are, we

must understand how these processes take place in any one organ. Suppose we take the kidney, for sake of example. Through some particular condition or other — some symptomatic complication, let us say — our diagnosis leads us to assume that the cause of an illness lies in the kidneys. If we call Spiritual Science to the aid of our diagnosis, we find that the kidney is acting too little as a sense-organ for the surrounding digestive and excretory processes; it is acting too strongly as an organ of metabolism; hence the balance is upset.

In such a case we have above all to ask: how are we to restore to it in a greater degree the character of sense-organ? We can say that because the kidney proves to be an insufficient sense-organ for the digestive and excretory processes, then we must see that it receives the necessary supply of silicic acid.

Now in the anthroposophical sense, there are three ways of administering substances that are required by a healthy human organism. The first is to give the patient a remedy by mouth. But in that case we must be guided by whether the whole digestive organism is so constituted that it can transmit the substances exactly to that spot where they are to be effective. We must know how a substance works — whether on the heart, or the lungs, and so forth, when we administer it by mouth and it passes into the digestive tract. The second

way is by injections. By this means we introduce a substance directly into the rhythmic system. There, it works more as a ‘process;’ there, that which in the metabolism is a substantial organisation, is transformed at once into a rhythmic activity and we directly affect the rhythmic system. Or again, we try the third way: we prepare a substance as an ointment to be applied at the right place, or administer it in a bath; in short we apply our remedy in an external form. There are, of course, a great many different methods of doing this.

We have these three ways of applying remedies. But now let us observe the kidneys which our diagnosis reveals as having a diminished capacity as a sense-organ. We have to administer the right kind of silicic acid process. Therefore we have to be attentive, because, in the breathing process as described just now, where the oxygen combines with silica and then disperses silicic acid throughout the body, and because during that process too little silicic acid has reached the kidneys, we must do something which will attract a stronger silicic acid process to them. So we must know how to come to the assistance of the organism which has failed to do this for itself; and for this we must discover what there is externally which is the result of a process such as is wanting in the kidneys. We must search for it. How can we find ways and means to introduce just this silicic acid process into the kidneys?

And now we find that the function of the kidneys, especially as it is a sense-function, is dependent upon the astral body. The astral body is at the basis of the excretory processes and of this particular form of them. Therefore we must stimulate the astral body and moreover in such a way that it will somehow carry the silicic acid process which is administered from outside, to an organ such as the kidney. We need a remedy that, firstly, will stimulate the silicic-acid process, and, secondly, which will stimulate it precisely in the kidneys. If we seek for it in the surrounding plant world, we come upon the plant *Equisetum arvense*, the ordinary field 'horsetail.' The peculiar feature of this plant is that it contains a great deal of silicic acid. If we were to give silicic acid alone it would, however, not reach the kidneys. Equisetum also contains sulphurous acid salts. Sulphurous acid salts alone work on the rhythmic system, on the excretory organs and on the kidneys in particular. When they are intimately combined as they are in *Equisetum arvense* (we can administer it by mouth, or if that is not suitable, in either of the other ways) — then the sulphurous acid salts enable the silicic acid to find its way to the kidneys.

Here we have touched upon a single instance — a pathological condition of the kidneys. We have approached it quite methodically; we have discerned what can supply what is lacking in the kidneys; and we have erected a bridge that can be followed step by step, from pathology to therapy.

Now let us take another case. Suppose we have to do with some disturbance of the digestive system — such as we usually include under the word ‘dyspepsia.’ If we again proceed according to Spiritual Science, we shall discover that here we have to do principally with a faulty and inadequate working of the Ego-organisation. Why is the Ego-organisation not acting strongly enough? That is the question. And we must search somewhere in the functional regions of the human organism for what it is that is causing this weakness of the Ego-organisation. In certain cases we find that the fault lies in the gall-bladder secretions. If that is so, then we must come to the assistance of the Ego-organisation (just as we came to the assistance of the kidneys with the equisetum) by administering something which, if it reaches the required spot by being prepared in a certain way, will there strengthen the inadequate working of the Ego-organisation. Thus, even as we find that the silicic acid process (which lies at the root of the nerves-and-senses system) when introduced in the right way to the kidneys enhances their sense-faculty, so we now find that such a process as the gall-bladder secretions (which corresponds primarily with the Ego-organisation) is really connected in quite a special manner (also in relation to other things) with the action of carbon. Now a remarkable thing to be observed is that if we wish to introduce carbon into the organism in the correct way for treating dyspepsia, we find that carbon — (though it is contained in every plant) — is contained in *Cichorium intybus* (chicory) in a form that directly

affects the gall-bladder. When we know how to make the correct preparation from *Cichorium intybus*, we can lead it over into the functions of this organ as a certain form of carbon-process, in the same way as is done with regard to the silicic-acid process and the kidneys.

With these simple examples — which are applicable either to slight or in certain circumstances to very severe cases of illness — I have tried to indicate how, by a spiritual-scientific observation of the human organism on the one hand, and on the other of the different natural creations and their respective interchanges with each other, there can be brought about, firstly, an understanding of the processes of illness, and secondly an understanding of what is required in order to reverse the direction of those processes. Healing becomes thereby a penetrating Art. This is what can be achieved for the art of Medicine, the art of Healing, by the kind of scientific research that is called Anthroposophy. There is nothing of the nature of fantasy about it. It is that which will bring research to the point of extreme exactitude with regard to the observation of the whole human being, both physically, psychically and spiritually. The condition of illness in man depends upon the respective activity of the physical, the psychic and the spiritual. And because man's constitution consists of nerves-and-senses system, rhythmic system, metabolic-and-limb system, we are enabled also to penetrate into the different processes and their degrees of activity. We learn to know how

a sense-function is present in the kidneys as soon as we direct our attention to the essential nature of sense-functions; otherwise, we only seek to discover sense-functions under their cruder aspect as they appear in the senses themselves. Now however, we become able to comprehend illness as such.

I have already said that in the metabolic-and-limb system, processes take place which are the opposite of those that take place in the system of nerves-and-senses. But it can happen that processes which primarily are also nerves and senses processes, and are, for instance, proper to the nerves of the head where they are ‘normal’ — It can happen that these processes can in a certain sense become dislodged by the metabolic-and-limb system; that through an abnormality of the astral body and Ego-organisation in the metabolic-limb-system something can happen which would be ‘correct’ or ‘normal’ only if taking place in the system of nerves-and-senses. That is to say, what is right for one system can be in another system productive of metamorphosis or disease. So that a process which properly belongs, for instance, to the system of nerves-and-senses makes its appearance in another system, and is then a process of disease. An example of this is found in typhoid fever. Typhoid represents a process which belongs properly to the nervous system. While it should play its part there in the physical organisation, it plays its part as a matter of fact in the region of the metabolic

system within the etheric organisation — within the ether body — works over into the physical body and appears there as typhoid. Here we see into the nature of the onset of illness. Or it can also happen that the dynamic force, or those forces which are active in a sense-organ (and must be active there in a certain degree in order that a sense-organ as such may arise) — become active somewhere where they should not. That which works in a sense-organ can be in some way or another transformed in its activity elsewhere. Let us take the activity of the ear. Instead of remaining in the system of nerves-and-senses, it obtrudes itself (and this under circumstances which can also be described) in another place — for example in the metabolic system where this is connected with the rhythmic system. Then there arises, in the wrong place, an abnormal tendency to produce a sense-organ; and this manifests itself as carcinoma — as a cancerous growth. It is only when we can look in this way into the human organism that we can perceive that carcinoma represents a certain tendency, displaced in respect of the systems, to the formation of a sense organ.

When we speak of the fertilisation of Medicine through Anthroposophy, it is a question of learning how abnormal conditions in the human organism arise from the fact that what is normal to one system transplants itself into another. And only by perceiving the matter thus is one in a position really to understand the human organism in its healthy and

diseased states, and so to make the bridge from pathology to therapy, from observation of the patient to healing the patient.

When these things are represented as a connected whole, it will be seen how nothing that is said from this standpoint can in any way contradict modern medicine. As a first step in this direction I hope that very soon now the book [‘*Fundamentals of Therapy*,’ by Dr. Rudolf Steiner and Dr. Ita Wegman.] will be published that has been written by me in collaboration with Dr. Wegman, the Director of the Clinical and Therapeutic Institute at Arlesheim. This book will present what can be given from the spiritual-scientific standpoint, not as a contradiction of modern medicine but as an extension of it. People will then be able to convince themselves that it has nothing to do with the kind of superficiality which is so prevalent to-day. This book will show, in a way that will be justified by modern science, the fruitfulness that can enter into the art of Healing by means of spiritual scientific investigation. Precisely when these things can be followed up more and more in detail and with scientific conscientiousness, will those efforts be acknowledged which are being made by such an Institution as the International Laboratories of Arlesheim, [Now “Weleda,” A. G., Arlesheim.] where a whole range of new remedies is being prepared in accordance with the principles here set forth.

In the third lecture it will be my endeavour to consolidate

still further (in so far as that can be done here in a popular manner), what has already been indicated as a rational therapy, by citing certain special cases of illness and the way in which they can be cured. Anyone who can really perceive what is meant will certainly not have any fear that the things stated cannot be subjected to serious test. We know that it will be the same in this as in all other domains of Anthroposophy; to begin with, there will be rebuffs, abuse and criticism by those who do not know it in detail. But those who do learn to know it in detail will stop their abuse. Therefore, in my third lecture I will go more into the particulars which will show that we are not evading modern science but are in full agreement with it, and that we proceed from the desire to enlarge the boundaries of Science by spiritual knowledge in the sphere of anthroposophical medicine.

Only when this is understood will the art of Healing stand upon its true foundations. For the art of Healing concerns man. Man is a being of body, soul and spirit. A real medicine can therefore only exist when it penetrates into a knowledge which embraces man in respect of all three — in respect of body, soul and spirit.

Art of Healing: Three Lectures

Lecture: I

Arnheim, Holland, 17th, 21st, and 24th July, 1924

IT will be necessary for me to begin this evening with a sort of introductory lecture, and deal with the actual subject itself in the two following lectures. I must do this because there are so many people in the audience to whom Anthroposophy is still but little known; and lectures dealing with a special subject would remain rather in the air if I did not begin with some introductory remarks treating of Anthroposophy in general before coming to definite observations in the domain of medicine.

Anthroposophy is indeed not as is so often said of it, some kind of craze, or a sect; it stands for a serious and scientifically-considered conception of the world; but a conception of the world which is applied just as seriously to the spiritual domain as we are accustomed to apply our modern scientific methods to the material domain. Now it might appear to begin with to many people that any suggestion of the *spiritual* at once introduces something unscientific, for the reason that people are generally inclined to the idea that only those things can be grasped scientifically which can be experienced by the senses, and carried further by means of the reason and intellect. It is the opinion of many

people that directly we step over into the spiritual it implies renunciation of Science. It is said that decisions with regard to spiritual questions rest upon subjective opinion, upon a kind of mystical feeling, which everyone must manufacture for himself; “faith” must take the place of scientific knowledge. The task of this introductory lecture shall be to show that this is not the case.

Above all, Anthroposophy does not set out to be “Science” in the generally-accepted sense of the word as something that lies apart from ordinary life and is practised by single individuals who are preparing for some specialised scientific career; on the contrary, it is a conception of the world which can be of value for the mind of every human being who has a longing to find the answers to questions regarding the meaning of life, the duties of life, the operation of the spiritual and material forces of life, and how to turn this knowledge to account. Hitherto in the Anthroposophical field there has been unfailing success in achieving entirely practical methods of applying Anthroposophical principles, more especially in the sphere of education. We have founded schools, which are organised on the basis of these conceptions. And in many well-recognized ways we have succeeded in a similar manner with regard to the art of healing. Anthroposophy does not wish to create obstacles in any sphere, or to appear in opposition to anything that is in the nature of “recognized science;” it will have nothing to do with dilettantism. It is above all anxious

that those who wish earnestly to work out what has been given as Anthroposophical knowledge, shall prize and admire all the great achievements that have resulted — with such fullness in recent times — from every kind of scientific endeavour. Therefore there can be no question (in the medical sphere or any other) of anything like dilettantism, nor of any opposition to modern science. On the contrary, it will be shown how by following certain spiritual methods one is in a position to *add* something to that which is already accepted, and which *can* only be added when the work of serious investigation is extended into the spiritual world itself.

Anthroposophy can do this because it strives after other kinds of knowledge which do not prevail in ordinary life or in ordinary science. In ordinary life, as in our customary scientific methods, we make use of such knowledge which we attain when in the course of our development we add to our inherited tendencies and capabilities what we can gain through the usual lower or higher grades of schooling, and which together make us into ripe human beings in the sense in which that is understood to-day. But Anthroposophy goes further than this; it desires to start from what I may call *intellectual modesty.* And this intellectual modesty (which must be there to begin with if we are to develop a feeling for Anthroposophy) I should like to characterise in the following manner.

Let us consider the development of a human being from earliest childhood onwards. The child first appears in the world showing outwardly in its life and inwardly in its soul nothing of that by which a fully- developed human being finds his orientation in the world through actions and knowledge. There must be education and up-bringing in order to draw out of the childlike soul and bodily organism those capacities which have been brought into the world in a dormant or “unripe” state. And we all admit that we cannot in the true sense of the word become active inhabitants of the world if we do not add to our inherited tendencies all those things which can only come by a process of unfolding and drawing them out. Then sooner or later, according to whether we have completed a higher or lower grade of education, we step out into life, having a particular relation to life, having the possibility of unfolding a certain consciousness with regard to our surroundings. Now anyone who approaches the intentions of Anthroposophy with true understanding, will say: Why should it not be possible — seeing that it is possible for a child to become something entirely different when its soul- qualities are developed — for such a thing to take place also in a man who is “ripe” according to the standard of to-day? Why should not a man who enters the world fully equipped with the best modern education, also contain hidden capacities in his soul which can be developed further, so that he can progress by means of this development to still further knowledge, and to a practical conduct of life which to some extent can be a

continuation of that which has brought him as far as the ordinary state of consciousness?

Therefore in Anthroposophy we undertake a kind of “self-development” — which is to lead out beyond the ordinary condition of consciousness.

There are three faculties in the human soul which are developed normally in life up to a certain point, but which we can unfold further; and Anthroposophy provides the only means in this our modern age of culture and civilisation which will create the necessary stimulus for the further development of these faculties. All three faculties can be so transformed as to become the faculties of a higher kind of knowledge.

First there is the *Thinking.* In the culture that we have acquired we use our thinking in such a way that we give ourselves over quite passively to the world. Indeed, Science itself demands that we should employ the least possible inner activity in our thinking, and that that which exists in the outer world should only speak to us through the observation of our senses; in fact that we must simply give ourselves over altogether to our sense-perceptions. We maintain that whenever we go beyond this passivity we are only led into dreams and fantastic notions. But where Anthroposophy is concerned, there is no question of fantasy or dreaminess, but of the exact opposite; we are guided to an inner activity which

is as clear as any method leading maybe to the attainment of mathematics or geometry. In fact we comport ourselves with regard to Anthroposophy precisely in the same way as we do with regard to mathematics or geometry, only in Anthroposophy we are not developing any *special* attribute, but on the contrary, *every* faculty that is connected with human hearts and minds — the whole sum of what is human. And the first thing that has to be done is something which, if people are only sufficiently free from prejudice, can be readily comprehended by everyone. It is simply that the capacity and the force of *Thinking* should be directed for a time not in order to grasp or understand some external thing, but just in order to allow a thought to remain present in the soul — such a thought as may be easily observed in its totality — and to give oneself up entirely to this thought for a certain length of time.

I will describe it more exactly. Anyone having the necessary feeling of confidence might turn to someone who was experienced in these matters and ask what would be the best kind of thought to which he might devote himself in this way. This person would then suggest some thought which could be surveyed with ease but which would at the same time be as new to him as possible. If we use an old familiar thought, it is very easy for all kinds of memories and feelings and subjective impressions to arise out of the soul, so that only a dreamy condition would be induced. But if the enquirer is directed to a thought which is quite certainly a new one, which

will arouse no memories, then he will be able to give himself up to it in such a way that the thought-forces of the soul will become stronger and stronger. In my own writings, and especially in my books — “Knowledge of the higher Worlds” and “An Outline of Occult Science,” I call this kind of thinking, which can be inwardly cultivated, *Meditation.* That is an old word: but to-day we will only use it in the particular connection which I will now describe. Meditation consists in turning the attention away from everything that has been either an inner or an external experience, and in thinking of nothing except that one thought, which must be placed in the very centre of the soul’s life. By thus directing all the strength that the soul possesses upon this single thought something takes place with regard to the forces of the soul which can only be compared to the constant repetitions of some movement of the hand. What is it that takes place when one does that? The muscles become stronger. It is exactly similar in the case of the soul’s powers. When they are directed again and again to one thought they gain force and strength. And if this goes on for a long time — (though to spend a long time at it on each occasion is certainly *not* necessary, because it is rather a question of entering into a state of soul produced by concentration on a single thought) — and the length of time depends also on predisposition, for with one person it might take a week, and with another three years, and so on — so, if we go on for a long period doing such exercises again and again perhaps for five minutes or fifteen minutes every day,

then we begin at last to have an inner sense that our being is becoming enfilled with a new content of force.

Previously, the forces of the nerves have been felt in the process of ordinary thinking and feeling, as we feel the forces of the muscles active in the grasping of objects or in whatever we perform. Just as we have been feeling these things gradually more and more in growing up from childhood, so in the same way we gradually begin to learn how to feel that something *new* is permeating us when we apply ourselves to such thought-exercises — of which I can now only indicate the general principles. (You will find them described in greater detail in my books.) Finally there comes a day when we are aware that we can no longer think about outer things *in the same way* as we used to think about them; but that now we have attained an entirely new soul-power; that we have something in us that is like an intensified, a stronger quality of thinking. And at last we feel that this kind of thinking enables us actually to *take hold* of what previously was only known to us in quite a shadowy way.

What we are then enabled to grasp is the essential reality of our *own life.* In what manner do we thus recognize our own earthly life — the life we have lived since birth? We know it through our memory, which reaches back as far as a certain point in our childhood. Rising out of undefined depths of the soul appears the remembrance of our past experiences. They

are like shadows. Think how shadowy those emerging memory pictures of our life are in comparison with the intense full- blooded experiences we have from day to day! If we now take hold of our thinking in the way that I have described, the shadowy quality of these memories ceases. We go back into our own actual earth-life; we experience again what we experienced ten or twenty years ago with the same inner forces and strength with which we originally experienced these events. Only the experience is not the same as formerly, inasmuch as we do not again come into direct contact with the external objects or beings, but we experience instead a kind of “extract” of it all. And that which we experience can, paradoxical as it may sound, be described as having definite significance. All at once, as in a mighty panorama, we have the whole of our life up to the time of birth before us. Not that we see the single events simply in a time-sequence, but we see them as a complete life-tableau. Time turns into Space. Our experiences are there before us, not as ordinary memories, but so that we know that we stand before the deeper being of our own humanity — like a second man within the man we know with our ordinary consciousness.

And then we arrive at the following: This physical human being that we confront in our ordinary consciousness is built up out of the matter which we take out of the Earth which is round about us. We continually discard this matter, and take in fresh matter, and we can definitely say that all the material

substances which have been discarded by our body are replaced by new substances within periods of time of from seven to eight years. The material in us is something that is in constant flux. And so, learning to know our own life through our intensified thinking, we come to know that which *remains* — which endures throughout the whole of our earth-life. It is, at the same time, that which builds up our organism out of outer material substance; and this latter is itself at the same time that which we survey as the tableau of our life.

Now what we see in this manner is distinguished in yet another way from ordinary memory. In ordinary memory the events of our life appear before the soul as though approaching us from outside. We remember what such and such a person has done to *us,* or what has accrued to us from this or that event. But in the tableau which arises from our intensified thinking, we learn to know ourselves as we really are *ourselves* — what we have done to other human beings, how *we* have stood in relation to any occurrence. We learn to know *ourselves.* That is the important point. For in learning to know ourselves, we also learn to know ourselves intensively, and in such a way that we know how we are placed within the forces of our growth, yes, even within the forces of our nourishment; and how it is we ourselves who build up and again disintegrate our own bodies. Thus we learn to know our own inner being.

Now the important thing is that when we come to this self-knowledge, we immediately experience something which can never be experienced by means of any ordinary science or through the ordinary consciousness. I must admit that nowadays it is really very difficult to express what is now arrived at, because in face of what is considered authoritative to-day, it sounds so strange. But so it is. At this point we experience something through our intensified thinking, of which we must say the following: — There are the laws of Nature which we study assiduously in the sciences; we even learn about them in the elementary schools. We are proud of this; and prosaic humanity is justly proud of what has been learnt of these laws of Nature in physics, chemistry and so on. Here I must emphatically declare that Anthroposophy does not set itself in any amateurish opposition to Science. But because of our grasp of inner intensive thinking we say that the natural laws which are learnt in connection with physics and chemistry are only present in the matter of the Earth, and they cease to be of any account so soon as we pass out into universal space.

Here I must state something which will not seem so very implausible to anyone who thinks over it without prejudice: suppose we have somewhere a source of light, we know that the more widely the light is distributed from its source the more it loses in intensity; and the further we go out into space the weaker it becomes, so that we are tempted to speak of it

no longer as “light” but as “twilight,” and finally when we have gone far enough it cannot be accounted as *light* any more. It is the same with the laws of Nature. They have a value for the region of the Earth, but the further we go out into the Cosmos they become less and less of value, until at length they cease to be of any account at all as laws of Nature. On the other hand, those laws which we come to apprehend through intensified thinking, which are already active in our own life, these show us that as human beings, we have not grown out of the natural laws of the Earth, but out of higher, *cosmic* laws. We have brought them with us in coming into earthly existence. And so we learn to recognize that the moment we have grasped our intensified thinking we can only apply natural law to the mineral kingdom. We cannot say — and this is a very reasonable error made by the newer physics — that natural laws can be applied to the Sun or the Stars. That cannot be done; for to wish to apply natural laws to the Universe would be just as artless as to wish to illumine the worlds of space with the light of a candle. Directly we ascend from the mineral, which as mineral is only apparent to us on this Earth, up to what is living, then we can no longer speak of the natural laws of the earthly realm, but we must speak of laws which worked down into the earthly realm from out of the Cosmos — from universal space. That is already the case with regard to the vegetable kingdom.

We can only use the laws of the Earth to explain the

mineral — laws, for example, such as the law of gravity and so on, which work from the centre of the Earth towards the circumference. When we come to the vegetable kingdom, then we must say that the entire globe is the central point, and that the laws of *life,* are working towards it from every side of the Cosmos — the same laws of life which we have first discovered in ourselves with our intensified thinking, and of which we have learnt to know that we build ourselves up between birth and death by their means.

To these laws, then, which work from the centre of the Earth outward, we add knowledge of the laws which work inwards towards the centre of the Earth from every direction, and which are already active in the vegetable kingdom. We look at the plants springing up out of the Earth and tell ourselves that they contain mineral matter. Chemistry to-day has gone very far in its knowledge of the respective activity of these mineral substances. That is all quite justifiable and quite right. And chemistry will go yet further. That will also be quite right. But if we want to explain the nature of plants we must explain their *growth,* and that cannot be done through the forces that work upwards from the Earth, but only through those forces that work inwards from the surroundings, from the Cosmos, into the Earth- existence. Hence we have to admit that our knowledge must ascend from an earthly conception to a cosmic conception; and moreover in this cosmic conception is contained the real *human Self-*

knowledge.

Now we can go further than this and transform our *Feeling.* To have “Feeling” in ordinary life is a personal affair, not actually a source of knowledge. But we can transform that which is ordinarily only experienced subjectively as feeling, into a real objective source of knowledge.

In Meditation we concentrate upon one particular thought; we arrive at intensified or “substantial” thinking and thereby are able to grasp something that works from the periphery of the Universe towards the centre of the Earth, in contradistinction to the ordinary laws of Nature, which work from the centre of the Earth outwards in all directions. So when we have reached this intensified thinking, and have perceived that our own life and also the life of the plants is spread out before our souls like a mighty panorama, then we go further. We come to a point, after having grasped something through this forceful thinking, when we can cast these strong thoughts aside. Anyone who knows how difficult it is, in ordinary life, to throw aside some thought which has taken hold of one, will understand that special exercises are necessary to enable this to be done. But it can be done. It is not only possible to cast out with the whole strength of our soul this thought that we have concentrated upon, but it is also possible to cast out the whole memory-tableau, and therewith our own life, and entirely to withdraw our attention

from it.

Something then begins to occur by which we clearly see that we are descending further into the depths of the soul, into those regions which are usually only accessible to our feeling. As a rule in ordinary life, if all impressions received by sight or hearing are shut off, we fall asleep. But if we have developed intensified thinking, we do not fall asleep even when we have thrown aside every thought — even the substantially intense ones. A condition arises in which no sense-perceptions and no thoughts are active, a condition we can only describe by saying that such a person is simply “awake;” he does not fall asleep; but he has nevertheless at first nothing in his consciousness. He is awake, with a consciousness that is empty. That is a condition revealed through Spiritual Science to which a person can attain who can be quite systematically and methodically developed — namely to have an empty consciousness in complete waking awareness.

In the usual way, if our consciousness is empty we are asleep. For from falling asleep to waking up we do have an empty consciousness — only — we are asleep in it. To have an empty consciousness and yet be awake, is the second stage of knowledge for which we strive. For this consciousness does not remain empty for long. It fills itself. As the ordinary consciousness can fill itself with colour through the perceptions of sight, or by the ear fill itself with sounds, so

this empty consciousness fills itself with a *spiritual world* which is just as much in our surroundings “there” as the ordinary physical world is in our surroundings here. The empty consciousness is the first to reveal the spiritual world — that spiritual world which is neither here on the Earth, nor in the Cosmos in Space, but which is outside Space and Time, and which nevertheless constitutes our deepest human nature. For if at first we have learnt to look back with the intense consciousness of thinking upon our whole earth-life as a script — now, with a consciousness that was empty and has become filled, we gaze into that world where we passed a life of soul and spirit before we came down into our earthly existence. We now learn to know ourselves as Beings who were spiritually present before birth and conception, who lived a pre-earthly existence before the one wherein we now are. We learn to recognize ourselves as beings of spirit and soul, and that the body that we bear we have received in that it was handed on to us by parents and grandparents. We have had it delivered to us in such a way that, as I have said, we can change it every seven years; but that which we are in our individual being has brought itself to Earth out of a pre-natal existence. But none of this is learnt by means of theorising, or by subtle cogitation; it can only be learnt when the suitable capacities are first of all unfolded in intellectual modesty.

Thus we have now learnt to know our inner humanity, our own individual being of spirit and soul. It comes to meet us

when we descend into the region of feeling and not merely *with* feeling, but also with knowledge. But first we must mark how the struggle for knowledge is bound up with strong inner experiences which can be indicated as follows: If you have bound up one of your limbs tightly, so that you cannot move it — even if someone perhaps only bandages two of your fingers together — you feel discomfort, possibly even pain. Now when you are in a condition where you experience what is soul and spirit without a body, you do not possess the whole of your physical being, for you are living in an empty consciousness. The passing-over into this state is connected with a profound feeling of pain. Beyond the feeling of pain, beyond the privation, we wrestle for the entrance into that which is our deepest spiritual and soul-being. And here many people are arrested by terror. But it is impossible to gain any explanation of our real human nature by any other means; and if we can learn it in this way, then we can go still further.

But now we have to develop a strength of knowledge which in ordinary life is not recognised as such at all; we have to develop *Lcve* as a force of knowledge — a selfless out-going into the things and processes of the world. And if we perfect this love ever more and more, so that we can actually lift ourselves out into the condition I have described, where we are body-free — and in this liberation from the body gaze at the world — then we learn to realise ourselves wholly as spiritual beings in the spiritual world. Then we know what man

is as *Spirit*; but then we also know what *dying* is; for in Death man lays his physical body altogether aside. In *this* knowledge, which as a third form, is experienced through the deepening of Love, we learn to know ourselves outside our body; we accomplish separation from it by the constructive quality of knowledge.

From this moment we know what it will mean when we lay aside our body in this Earth-existence and go through the Gate of Death. We learn to know death. But we also learn to know the life of the soul and spirit on the other side of death. Now we know the spiritual- soul-being of man as it will be after death. As at first we had learnt to recognize our being as it is before the descent into earthly life, so now we know the continuation of the life of this being in the world of soul and spirit after death.

Then something else occurs which causes us to mark clearly how imperfect is the consciousness of to-day; for it speaks of “immortality,” out of its hope and faith. But immortality — deathlessness — is only one half of Eternity — namely the everlasting continuation of the present point of time. We have to-day no word such as was to be found in the degrees of knowledge of an older time, which points to an immortality in the *ether* half of Eternity — “*unborn-ness.”*

Because just as man is deathless, so is he also *unborn*;

that is to say, with birth he steps out of the spiritual world into physical existence, just as at death he passes from the physical world into a spiritual existence. Therefore in this manner we learn of the true being of man, which is spiritual, and which goes through birth and death; and only then are we in a position to comprehend our *whole* being.

The principles which I have briefly outlined have already formed the content of a wealth of literature, which has imbibed a conscientiousness and a responsibility towards its knowledge out of the realm of exact Science, on which alone this sense of responsibility can rest to-day. So we attain to a Spiritual Science, which has grown out of ordinary Science.

And just on account of this, we learn something else — namely how life consists of two tendencies or streams. People speak in a general way to-day about development; they say the child is small — it develops — it grows; it is full of energy — strong — it blossoms with life. They say that a lower form of life has evolved to a higher; — -quickening, blooming life — growing ever more and more complicated! And that is right. But this stream of “life” is there, however, in opposition to another stream, which is present in every sentient living being — namely, a *destructive* tendency. Just as we have a budding and sprouting life in us, integrating life — so we have also the life of disintegration. Through knowledge such as this we perceive that we cannot merely say that our life streams up

into the brain and nervous system, and that this matter organises itself so that the nervous system can become the bearer of the life of the soul. No — it is not like that. The life is germinating and sprouting, but at the same time there is continual destruction incorporated into it.

Our life is incessantly going to pieces … the blossoming life is always giving place to the decaying life. We are actually dying by degrees and at every moment something falls to ruin in us, and every time we build it up again. But, whereas matter is being destroyed, it leaves room wherein what is of the soul and spirit can enter and become active in us. And here we touch upon the great error made by materialism, for materialism believes that the sprouting and budding life evolves up to the nervous system in man so that the nerves are built up in the same way as the muscles are built up out of the blood. It is true they are. But no *thinking* is developed by means of building up the nerves; neither is feeling. On the contrary, in that the nerves decay to a certain extent the psychic-spiritual incorporates itself into what is decaying. We must first disintegrate matter in order that the psychic-spiritual can appear in us and enable us to experience it for ourselves.

That will be the great moment in the development of a rightly-understood Natural Science, when the *opposite* to evolution will be recognized as carrying evolution forward at the corresponding point; when it will recognize not only

integration, but also disintegration — thus admitting not only evolution but devolution. And thus it will be understood how the spiritual in the animal and in man — but in the latter in a self-conscious way — takes hold of the material. The spiritual does not take hold of the material because the latter is developing itself against it, but because matter, by a contrary process, is destroying itself; and the spiritual comes into evidence, the spiritual reveals itself, in this process. Therefore we are filled with the spirit; for it is everywhere present in devolution but not in evolution, which is Earth-development. Then we learn to observe that man as he stands before us in his entirety, is as though contained within a polar antithesis. Everywhere, in every single organ, wherever there is an upbuilding process there is also a destructive process going on. If we look at any one of the organs, it may be the liver, or the lungs, or the heart, we see that it is in a constant stream which consists of integration — disintegration, integration — disintegration. Is it not really rather an extraordinary expression that we use when we say for example “Here flows the Rhine?” What *is “*the Rhine?” When we say “Here flows the Rhine,” we do not as a rule mean that “there is the river-bed `Rhine,’“ but we mean the flowing water which we look at. Yet it is different every moment. The Rhine has been there a hundred years, a thousand years. But what is it which is there every moment? It is what is realised as being in alteration every moment in the flowing stream. In the same way everything that we contain is held within a stream of change,

in integration and disintegration, and in its disintegration it becomes the bearer of the spiritual. And so in every normal human being there exists a state of balance between anabolism and catabolism, and in this balance he develops the right capacity for the soul and spirit. Nevertheless, this balance can be disturbed, and can be disturbed to such an extent that some organ or other may have its correct degree of anabolism in relation to too slight a degree of catabolism, and then its growth becomes rampant. Or contrariwise, some organ may have a normal process of disintegration against too slight an anabolism, in which case the organ becomes disturbed, or atrophies; and thus we pass out of the physiological sphere into the pathological.

Only when we can discern what this condition of balance signifies, can we also discern *how* it may be disturbed by an excess of either integrating or disintegrating forces. But when we recognize this, then we can turn our gaze to the great outer world, and can find there what, under certain conditions, will act so as to equalise these two processes.

Suppose we take for example a human organ that is disturbed by reason of too strong a destructive process, and then look with sight made clear by spiritual-scientific knowledge at something outside in Nature, say at a plant; we shall know that in a particular plant there are anabolic — building-up — properties. Now it becomes apparent that in the

habit of certain plants there are always anabolic properties and that these correspond precisely to the anabolic forces of human organs. Thus, we can discover — when we make use of these conceptions which have now been developed by me — that there are anabolic forces in the kidneys. Let us suppose the kidneys are too weak, that their destructive forces are excessive. We turn to the plants, and we find in the common marestail, *Equisetum Arvensae,* anabolic forces which exactly correspond to those which belong to the kidneys. If we make a preparation from equisetum and administer it through the digestive process into the blood-circulation and thus conduct it in the right way to the region in the body where it can work, we strengthen the debilitated anabolic forces of the kidneys. And so we can proceed with all the organs. Once we have grasped this knowledge we have the possibility of bringing back into a condition of balance the unbalanced processes of integration and disintegration by using the forces which can be found in the outside world. If on the other hand we have to deal with forces of anabolism either in the kidneys or elsewhere which have become over- strong, then it will be necessary to reinforce the destructive processes. In this case we must have recourse to the lower type of plants, let us say the fern species, which have this property.

In this way we pass beyond the point of mere experiment and test in order to discover whether a preparation will be

beneficial or not. We can look into the human organism in respect of the relative balance of the organs themselves; we can penetratingly survey Nature for the discovery of the anabolic and catabolic forces, and thus we make the Art of Healing into something wherein we can really see that a remedy is not administered just because statistics confirm that in such and such cases it is useful — but because by a really penetrating survey both of the human being and Nature we know with exactitude in every case the natural process in a Nature-product that can be transformed into a healing factor — that is, for the human organs in respect of the anabolic and catabolic forces.

I do not mean to say that in recent times Medicine has not made immense progress. Anthroposophy recognises this progress in Medicine to the full. Neither have we any wish to exclude what modern medical science has accomplished; on the contrary we honour it. But when we examine what has been brought out in the way of remedies in recent times we find that they have only been arrived at by way of lengthy experimentation. Anthroposophy supplies a penetrating knowledge which by its survey of human nature has fully proved itself in those spheres where Medicine has already been so happily successful. But *in addition* to this, Anthroposophy offers a whole series of new remedies also, a fact which is made possible by the same insight applied to both Nature and Man.

Therefore if we learn to look into the human being spiritually in this way — (and I will later show how the Art of Healing can be made fruitful in every single sphere through a true knowledge of the spirit) — we also learn to look into the spiritual life together with the material life, and then we arrive — and this no longer in the old dreamlike way which had its overflow in Mythology, but in an exact way — then we can arrive at a bringing together of perfectly rational knowledge with a “message” of Healing.

Man learns to heal by means of a real and artistic conception of an art that has grown out of the world itself. Therewith we come again into touch with what existed in ancient times — though it was not then to be found in the way in which we to-day must aspire to find it now that we have the great wealth of Science behind us; — for what existed in ancient times through a kind of dreamlike knowledge, can lead us to-day to the application of forces and spiritual forces in connection with human health and sickness.

In ancient times there were the Mystery Centres in which a knowledge was cultivated which could solve humanity’s religious problems and satisfy the longings of the soul; and in connection with the Mysteries there were Centres of Healing. To-day, quite rightly, we regard the things that were cultivated there as somewhat childish. But there was nevertheless a sound kernel in them; — it was known that the knowledge of

the so-called normal world must go forward into knowledge of the abnormal world. Is it not strange that we, on the other hand, say that in his healthy state man comes forth out of Nature, and that then we have to explain the *unhealthy* man also by the laws of Nature? For every illness can be explained by these laws. Does Nature then contradict herself? We shall see that she does not do so with regard to disease. But our knowledge must be a continuation from the normal physical into the pathological. Knowledge can attain value for life only in so far as that side by side with those places where the normal aspects of life are cultivated, there must also be found those that are concerned with the illnesses of life.

There was to have been a centre of knowledge at the Goetheanum at Dornach in Switzerland, in the building which most unfortunately was burnt down, but which we hope will soon be rebuilt. It was to be a centre of knowledge where mankind would have been able to satisfy those longings of the soul which seek to penetrate into the sources of life. And out of what I might call a natural sequence it came to be regarded as a matter of course that there should be added to the Goetheanum a centre of Healing. True, this could only be, at first, of a modest kind. Such a thing *must* be there wherever there is to be a real knowledge of humanity. And we have it in the Clinical-Therapeutical Institute at Arlesheim which is the result of the efforts of Frau Dr. Wegman, and which has been followed by the founding of a similar Institute under Dr.

Zeylmans van Emmichoven at The Hague. And so at Dornach there is established once again, side by side with the centre of Knowledge, a centre of Healing. And whereas courage must always be a part of everything that pertains to knowledge of the Spirit, so *courage* belongs above all things, to the way of Healing. This vital element lives in that Institute at Arlesheim — *the courage to heal*; in order that all which comes forth out of the *whole* human being as the possibility to control the forces of healing, may be used as a blessing for humanity. Therefore, such a centre of Knowledge, which once more strives towards the Mysteries — albeit in the modern sense — and where the great questions of existence are dealt with, must have beside it, even though it may be only in a modest way, a centre of Healing where knowledge of the smallest details of life is cultivated and where the effort is made to deepen the Art of Healing in a spiritual sense.

In the external nearness of Knowledge-Centre and Healing-Centre to one another we have the outer image of how close a connection should exist between Anthroposophical knowledge and the practical work of Healing, and that this should exist as such a spiritual Art that out of a conception of conditions of illness in the human being, there should grow a conception of Therapeutics, of Healing, so that the two may not fall asunder, but that the diagnostic process may be carried on into the healing process. The aim of Anthroposophy herein is that while one makes a diagnosis in

the knowledge one has of what is happening in a person when he is ill, at the same moment one sees that such and such a thing is taking place, or something is happening in the anabolic processes. One then recognizes Nature for example in occurrences brought about by destructive forces; one knows where the destructive forces are to be found, and in administering these as a healing agent one is thus able to act so that these destructive forces can work against the upbuilding forces in the human being. And vice versa. So one is able to perceive clearly in what is going on in the human being, an unhealthy condition; but even in perceiving this unhealthy condition one immediately perceives also the nature of the working of the healing agent.

To-day I wished only to demonstrate the nature of a spiritual way of knowledge, and point out that the effect of this spiritual knowledge is such that man does not merely approach natural and spiritual forces in a theoretical way, but that he also learns to handle them, and out of his spiritual learning to mould life.

With advancing civilisation, life becomes continually more and more complicated. At the present time a longing is dominating the subconscious life of many souls — a longing to find what may be the source out of which this more and more complicated life has grown. Anthroposophy tries above all to assuage these longings. And we shall see that against

much that is destructive in the life of to-day it honestly desires to co-operate in all that is constructive, that is advancing, that tends to prosperity in our civilisation — not with helpless phrases but actively, in all the practical questions of life.

II

Arnheim, Holland, 21st, 1924

IN the last lecture I tried to point out how by means of the kind of knowledge cultivated by Anthroposophy, man may be seen in his whole nature — consisting of body, soul and Spirit. I tried to show also how an inner knowledge of the conditions of health and disease can only be arrived at when the *entire* nature of man can be perceived in this way; and how in learning to know the true connections between the things which take place within man and the external processes and conditions of substances in Nature, we also succeed in establishing a connecting link between pathology and therapy.

Our next task will be to explain in detail what was only given in general outline in the first lecture. And for this it will above all be necessary to observe how *disintegration* is proceeding in the human organism and how, on the other hand, there is a constant process of *integration*. Man has, to begin with, an external physical organisation which is perceptible by means of the outer senses, and whose manifestations can be

comprehended by the reason. Besides this physical body there is also the first super-sensible body of the human being: the *etheric*, or *life-body*. These two principles of the constitution of man serve to *build up* (integrate) the human organisation.

The physical body is continually renewed as it casts off its substance. The etheric body — which contains the forces of growth and of assimilation — is, in the entirety of its constitution, something of which we can gain a conception when we behold the growing and blossoming plant-kingdom in the spring; for the plants, as well as human beings, have an etheric or life-body. In these two members of the human organisation we have a progressive, constructive evolution.

In so far as man is a sentient being, he bears within himself the next member, the *astral body*. (We need not feel that such terms are objectionable; we should perceive what they reveal to us.) The astral body is essentially the mediator of sensation, the bearer of the inner life of feeling. The astral body contains not only the upbuilding forces but also the forces of *destruction*. Just as the etheric body makes the being of man bud and sprout, as it were, so all these processes of budding are continually being disintegrated again by the astral body; and just because of this, just because the physical and etheric bodies are continually being *disintegrated*, there exists in the human organisation an

activity of *soul* and *Spirit*.

It would be quite a mistake to suppose that the soul and Spirit in man's nature inhere in the upbuilding process and that this process at last reaches a certain point — let us say in the nervous system — where it can become the bearer of soul and Spirit. That is not the case. When eventually (and everything points to this being soon), our very admirable modern scientific research has made further progress, it will become apparent that an anabolic, a constructive process in the nervous system is *not* the essential thing; it is present in the nervous organisation merely in order that the nerves may, in fact, exist. But the nerve-process is in a continual, though slow state of dissolution; and because it is so, because the physical is always being dissolved, a place is set free for the Spirit and soul.

In a still higher degree is this the case as regards the actual Ego-organisation, by means of which man is raised above all the other beings of Nature surrounding him on the Earth. The Ego-organisation is essentially bound up with katabolism; it is of greatest moment in those parts of the human being that are in a state of *disintegration*.

So when we look into this wonderful form of the human organism, we see that in every single organ there is construction, integration (whereby the organ ministers to

growth and progressive development), and also destruction, whereby it ministers to *retrogressive* physical development, and by so doing gives foothold for the soul and Spirit. I said in the last lecture that the state of balance between integration and disintegration which is present in a particular way in every human organ, can be disturbed. The upbuilding process can become rampant; in that case we have to do with an unhealthy condition. When we look in this way into the nature of the human being (to begin with I can only state these things rather abstractly; they will be expressed more concretely presently), when we proceed conscientiously, with a sense of scientific responsibility and do not talk in generalisations about the presence of integration and disintegration, but really *study* each individual organ as conscientiously as we have learnt to do in scientific observations to-day — then we shall be able to penetrate into this condition of balance that is necessary for the single organs and so find it possible to obtain a conception of the human being in health. If in either direction, either with respect to constructive or with respect to destructive processes, the balance of an organ is upset, then we have to do with something that is *unhealthy* in the human organism.

Now, however, we must discover how this human organism stands in relation to the three kingdoms of Nature in the outer world — the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms — from which we have of course to extract our remedies. When we

have studied this inner state of balance in the manner described, we shall see how everything that is present in the three kingdoms of Nature outside man is, in every direction, being *overcome* within the human organism.

Let us take the simplest example: — the condition of *warmth* in man. Nothing of the outer conditions of warmth must be carried on unchanged when it is once within the human organism. When we investigate the manifestations of warmth outside in Nature, we know that warmth raises the temperature of things in the outer world. We say that warmth penetrates into things. If we, in our organisation, were to be penetrated in the same way by warmth we should be made ill by it. It is only when, through the forces and quality of our organisation we are able to receive this warmth-process which is being exercised upon us, into our organism and immediately transform it into an inner process, that our organisation is in a state of health. We are harmed by either heat or cold directly we are not in a position to receive it into our organisation and transform it.

In respect of warmth or cold everyone can see this quite easily for himself. Moreover the same holds good for all other Nature processes. Only careful study, sharpened by spiritual perception, can lead to the recognition that every process taking place in Nature is transformed, metamorphosed, when it occurs within the human organism. We are indeed

incessantly *overcoming* what lives in our earthly environment.

If we now consider the whole internal organisation of man we must say that if the inner force of the human being which inwardly transforms the external events and processes that are always working in upon him — for example, when he is taking nourishment — if this force were removed, then all that enters man from outside would work as a foreign process, and in a sense — if I were to express it crudely or trivially — man would be filled with foreign bodies or foreign processes. On the other hand, if the higher members of man's being, the astral body and the Ego-organisation develop excessive strength, then he does not only so transform the outer processes of his environment that enter into him as they *should* be transformed, but he does so more rampantly. Then there is a speeding-up of the processes which penetrate him. External Nature is driven out *beyond* the human — becomes in a certain sense, over-spiritualised; and we are faced with a disturbance of the health.

What we have thus indicated as an abstract principle is realty present in every human organ and must be studied individually in the case of them all. Moreover the human being is related in a highly complicated manner, to all the different *ways* in which he transforms the external processes.

He who strives to get beyond the undisputed testimony of

up-to-date anatomy and physiology, who tries to develop his understanding so that he can transform the conception of the human organism yielded by a study of the corpse or pathological conditions, observing them not merely in regard to their “dead” structures but according to their *living* nature, will find himself faced with endless enigmas of the human organism. For the more exact and the more living our knowledge becomes, the more complicated does it appear. There are, however, certain guiding lines which enable us to find our way through the labyrinth. And if I may be allowed to make a personal observation here, it is that the discovery of such guiding lines was a matter with which I occupied myself for thirty years before I began to speak about it openly — which was about the year 1917. As a comparatively young man, in the early twenties, I asked myself whether there was any possibility of research into this complicated human organisation. Were there certain fundamental principles which would enable one to arrive at a comprehensive understanding? And this led me — (I have just said that the study took me thirty years) — to the fact that one can regard the human organisation from *three different aspects*: the *system of nerves and senses*, the *rhythmic system*, and the *metabolic and limb system*.

What we can call the organisation of nerves and senses predominates over all the others. It is, moreover, the bearer of all that can be described as the *life of concepts*. On the other

hand, what we describe as the rhythmic organisation is, in a certain respect, self-contained. There is the rhythm of the breath, the rhythm of the circulation, the rhythm manifested in sleeping and waking, and countless other rhythmic processes. It was by making a practical and accurate distinction between the rhythmic organisation and the nerves-and-senses organisation that I first discovered how one could distinguish between the different constituent parts of the human being. I was compelled to ask myself the question — it is now nearly forty years ago, and to-day human hearts are more than ever burdened with baffling physiological problems — I was compelled to ask myself whether on this basis it is really possible to say that the whole inner life of thinking, feeling and willing is bound up with the system of nerves and senses. At the same time I felt that there was a contradiction: how *can* thinking, feeling and willing be bound up with the nerves and senses? Naturally I cannot go into all this detail to-day, I can only indicate it; but when we come to consider the domain of therapeutics much will be explained. For instance if from the physiological standpoint we carefully and accurately study the effect of music upon the human organisation, if we know the intimate connection that exists between our experience of music and the rhythmic processes within us, if we understand the quality of soul in music itself, and study the measure of our feelings with regard to melody and harmony, we say to ourselves at first that the feeling-life of man is *not* altogether directly connected with the nervous system; on the contrary, it

is experienced in the rhythmic system. It is only when we rise to a higher conception of what we feel at first to be directly connected in musical experience with the rhythmic system that we find that the conception of it is actually carried by the nervous system. Thus we come to the conclusion that the nervous system and the rhythmic system are really inwardly organised as two entirely separate things.

Take modern physiology with all that it has to offer, especially all that it can tell you with regard to the experiences you can have in connection with music. If you study, for instance, such a thing as the human ear as it perceives the different sounds and tones, you will certainly say that audible phenomena (*i.e.* one particular class of sense-perception), are first of all incorporated into the rhythmic system of man, rise rhythmically to the sense-organisation, rhythmically approach the nervous system and then become a *concept* created by means of the nervous-system. The rhythmic system is in immediate connection with the nervous system, which is the bearer of thought — but it is the bearer of feeling only in so far as we become aware of our feelings through thoughts and these thoughts are carried by the nervous system. We can proceed in the same way if we apply physiology to the metabolic-limb-system. It may seem strange to connect metabolism and limbs together; but you need only consider how everything that has to do with movement and which belongs to the limb-system, reacts upon the metabolism. The

metabolism and the limbs taken together are certainly a uniform whole.

When we investigate these things accurately and not in a confused way, it becomes evident once more that the system of metabolism and limbs is the direct bearer of all manifestations of the human *will*. Once more, then, it is as follows: — When that which is taking place in the metabolic-limb-system as the bearer of the manifestations of will, works upwards, sends its force up into the rhythmic system, then it passes into the realm of *feeling*. We unfold our feelings in our will and our will is directly inherent in our metabolic processes — *absolutely directly*. We experience the will as ‘feeling’ in the rhythmic system, *indirectly*. And we make thoughts for ourselves about our volitional acts because the metabolic system and rhythmic system drive their forces up into the nervous system.

Thus we have guiding lines for penetrating into the human organisation. For if we first of all perceive what has been given in regard to the nervous system — (to begin with we will leave the rhythmic system lying between the two others) — then we shall find a polar antithesis in every direction: the nervous system and the metabolic system are polarically opposite. As the metabolic-limb-system builds up, so the system of nerves and senses destroys and *vice versa*. This and many other things demonstrate the polarity. Everything

that constitutes the *Ego-organisation* is intimately bound up with the system of nerves and senses; everything that constitutes the etheric body is intimately bound up with the metabolic and limb system; everything that constitutes the astral body is bound up with the rhythmic system; the physical body permeates the whole, but is continually overcome by the three other members of the human organisation. Only when we observe the human organism in this way can we leam to penetrate into the so-called normal or abnormal processes.

Let us take first the organisation of nerves and senses. But first, so that I may not be misunderstood, I would like to make a short digression. A very sceptical naturalist who had heard in quite a superficial way about these members which I posit as the basis of man's nature, said that I had attempted to distinguish between "head-organisation," "chest-organisation," and "abdominal organisation:" thus that I had in a sense located the system of nerves and senses only in the head, the rhythmic organisation in the chest, and the metabolic-limb system in the abdomen. But that is a very unjust statement. For without separating the systems spatially, the nerves and senses may be said to be organised *principally* in the head, but they are *also* to be found in the other two systems. The rhythmic system is *principally* located in the middle organisation; but it again is spread over the whole man; similarly the metabolic organisation. It is not a question of making a spatial separation between the organs, but of

understanding their *qualitative* aspect and what is living in and permeating the single organs.

When we study the system of nerves and senses from this standpoint, we find that it spreads throughout the whole organism. The eye or the ear, for example, are organised in such a way that they pre-eminently contain the nerves and senses, in a lesser degree the rhythmic, and in a still less degree the metabolic system. An organ like the kidney, for instance, does not contain so much of the nerves and senses system as of the rhythmic or metabolic organisation, yet it contains something of all three. We do not understand the human being if we say: *here* are sense-organs, or *there* are digestive organs. In reality it is quite different. A sense-organ is only *principally* sense-organ; every sense-organ is also in a certain way a digestive and a rhythmic organ. The kidneys or the liver are to be understood as being principally assimilatory or excretory organs. In a lesser degree they are organs of nerves and senses. If, then, we study the whole organisation of man with its single organs from the point of view of the system of nerves and senses (in its reality, and not according to the fantastic concepts often formed by physiology), we find that man ‘perceives’ by means of his separate senses — sight, hearing and so on; but we also find that he is entirely permeated by the sense-organisation. The kidney, for instance, is a sense-organ which has a delicate perception of what is taking place in the digestive and excretory processes.

The liver too, is — a sense-organ. The heart is in a high degree an inner sense-organ and can only be understood if it is conceived of as such.

Do not imagine that I have any intention of criticising the science of to-day; I know its worth and my desire is that our view of these things shall be firmly grounded upon it. But we must nevertheless be clear that our science is, at present, not able to penetrate fully and precisely into the being of man. If it could, it would not relate the animal organisation so closely to the human in the way it does in our time. In respect of the life of sense, the animal stands at a lower level than the human organisation. The human nerves and senses organisation is yoked to the Ego-organisation; in the animal it is yoked to the astral body. The sense-life of man is entirely different from that of the animal. When the animal perceives something with its eyes — and this can be shown by a closer study of the structure of the eye — something takes place in the animal which, so to say, goes through the whole of its body. It does not happen like that in man. In man, sense-perception remains far more at the periphery, is concentrated far more on the surface. You can understand from this that there are delicate organisations present in animals which, in the case of the higher species, are only to be found in etheric form. But in certain of the lower animals you find, for instance, the xiphoid process which is also present in higher animals but in their case it is etheric; or you may find the pecten or choroid

process in the eye. The way in which these organs are permeated by the blood, shows that the eye shares in the whole organisation of the animal and is the mediator to it of a life in the circumference of its environment. Man, on the other hand, is connected with his system of nerves and senses quite differently and therefore lives, in a far higher sense than the animal, in his *outer* world, whereas the animal lives more *within itself*. But everything which is communicated through the higher spiritual members of the human being, which lives itself out through the Ego-organisation by way of the nerves and senses, requires — just because it is present within the domain of the physical body — to receive its material influences from out of the physical world.

Now if we closely study the system of nerves and senses at a time when it is functioning perfectly healthily, we find that its working depends on a certain substance, and on the processes that take place in that substance. Matter is something which is never at rest; it merely represents what is, actually, a ‘process.’ (A crystal of quartz, for instance, is only a self-contained, definitely shaped thing to us because we never perceive that it is a ‘process,’ though indeed it is one which is taking place extremely slowly.) We must penetrate further and further into the human organism and learn to understand its transformative activity. That which enters into the organism as external physical substance has to be taken up by it and *overcome*, in the way described in the

introductory lecture.

Now it is especially interesting that when the system of nerves and senses is in a normal, *i.e.* a healthy state (which must of course be understood relatively), it is dependent upon a delicate process which takes place under the influence of the *silicic acid* which enters the organism. Silicic acid, which in the outer realm of Nature forms itself into beautiful quartz-crystals, has this peculiarity: when it penetrates into the human organism it is taken up by the processes of the nerves and senses; so that if we look at the system of nerves and senses with spiritual sight, we see a wonderfully delicate process going on in which silicic acid is active. But if we look at the other side of the question — as when I said that man has senses everywhere — then we shall notice that it is only in the periphery, that is, where the senses are especially concentrated, that the silicic acid process is intensified; when we turn to the more inner parts of the organism, to the lungs, liver or kidneys, it is far less strong, it is ‘thinner’; while in the bones it is again stronger. In this way we discover that man has a remarkable constitution.

We have, so to say, a periphery and a circumference where the senses are concentrated; then we have that which fills out the limbs and which carries the skeleton; between these we have the muscles, the glands and so on.

In that which I have described as the “circumference” and the “centralised,” we have the strongest silicic acid processes; we can follow them into the organs that lie between these two, and there we find that they have their own specific silicic acid processes but weaker than those in the circumference. Thus in respect of the outer parts, where man extends in an outgoing direction from the nerves into the senses, he needs more and more silicic acid; in the centre of his system he requires comparatively little; but where his skeleton lies, at the basis of the motor system, there again he requires *more* silicic acid. Directly we perceive this fact we recognize the inexactitude of many assertions of modern physiology. (And again let me emphasise that I do not wish to criticise them, but merely to make certain statements.) For instance, if we study the life of the human being according to modern physiology, we are directed to the breathing-process. In certain respects this is a complex process, but — speaking generally — it consists in taking in oxygen out of the air, and breathing out carbonic acid. That is the rhythmical process which is essentially the basis of organic life. We say that oxygen is breathed in, that it goes through certain processes described by physiology, within the organism; that it combines with carbon in the blood, and is then ejected on the breath as carbonic acid. This is perfectly correct according to a purely external method of observation. This process is, however, connected with another. We do not merely breathe in oxygen and combine it with carbon. Primarily, that is done with that

portion of the oxygen which is spread over the lower part of the body; *that* is what we unite with the carbon and breathe out as carbonic acid.

There is another and a more delicate process behind this rhythmical occurrence. That portion of the oxygen which, in the human organisation, rises towards the *head* and therefore (in the particular sense which was mentioned previously) to the system of nerves and senses, unites itself with the substance we call silica, and forms silicic acid. And whereas in man the important thing for the metabolic system is the production of *carbonic acid*, so the important thing for the nerves and senses system is the production of *silicic acid*. The latter is a finer process which we are not able to verify with the coarse instruments at our disposal, though all the means are there by which it *can* be verified. Thus we have the coarser process on the one hand, and on the other the finer process where the oxygen combines with the silica to form silicic acid, and as such, is secreted inwardly in the human organisation.

Through this secretion of silicic acid the whole organism becomes a sense-organ — more so in the periphery, less so in the separate organs.

If we look at it this way, we can perceive the more delicate intimate structure of the human organism, and see how every

organ contains, of necessity, processes related to substances each in its own distinct degree.

If we are now to grasp what health and illness really are, we must understand how these processes take place in any one organ. Suppose we take the *kidney*, for sake of example. Through some particular condition or other — some symptomatic complication, let us say — our diagnosis leads us to assume that the cause of an illness lies in the kidneys. If we call Spiritual Science to the aid of our diagnosis, we find that the kidney is acting too little as a *sense-organ* for the surrounding digestive and excretory processes; it is acting *too strongly as an organ of metabolism*; hence the balance is upset.

In such a case we have above all to ask: how are we to restore to it in a greater degree the character of sense-organ? We can say that because the kidney proves to be an insufficient sense-organ for the digestive and excretory processes, then we must see that it receives the necessary supply of silicic acid.

Now in the anthroposophical sense, there are *three ways* of administering substances that are required by a healthy human organism. The first is to give the patient a remedy by mouth. But in that case we must be guided by whether the whole digestive organism is so constituted that it can transmit

the substances exactly to that spot where they are to be effective. We must know how a substance works — whether on the heart, or the lungs, and so forth, when we administer it by mouth and it passes into the digestive tract. The second way is by injections. By this means we introduce a substance *directly* into the rhythmic system. There, it works more as a 'process;' there, that which in the metabolism is a substantial organisation, is transformed at once into a rhythmic activity and we directly affect the rhythmic system. Or again, we try the third way: we prepare a substance as an ointment to be applied at the right place, or administer it in a bath; in short we apply our remedy in an external form. There are, of course, a great many different methods of doing this.

We have these three ways of applying remedies. But now let us observe the kidneys which our diagnosis reveals as having a diminished capacity as a sense-organ. We have to administer the *right kind* of silicic acid process. Therefore we have to be attentive, because, in the breathing process as described just now, where the oxygen combines with silica and then disperses silicic acid throughout the body, and because during that process too little silicic acid has reached the kidneys, we must do something which will attract a stronger silicic acid process to them. So we must know *how* to come to the assistance of the organism which has failed to do this for itself; and for this we must discover what there is *externally* which is the result of a process such as is wanting

in the kidneys. We must search for it. How can we find ways and means to introduce just this silicic acid process into the kidneys?

And now we find that the function of the kidneys, especially as it is a sense-function, is dependent upon the *astral body*. The astral body is at the basis of the excretory processes and of this particular form of them. Therefore we must stimulate the astral body and moreover in such a way that it will somehow carry the silicic acid process which is administered from outside, to an organ such as the kidney. We need a remedy that, firstly, will stimulate the silicic-acid process, and, secondly, which will stimulate it precisely in the kidneys. If we seek for it in the surrounding plant world, we come upon the plant *equisetum arvensÃ¦*, the ordinary field “horse-tail.” The peculiar feature of this plant is that it contains a great deal of silicic acid. If we were to give silicic acid alone it would, however, not reach the kidneys. Equisetum also contains sulphurous acid salts. Sulphurous acid salts alone work on the rhythmic system, on the excretory organs and on the kidneys in particular. When they are intimately combined as they are in *Equisetum ArvensÃ¦* (we can administer it by mouth, or if that is not suitable, in either of the other ways) — then the sulphurous acid salts enable the silicic acid to find its way to the kidneys.

Here we have touched upon a single instance — a

pathological condition of the kidneys. We have approached it quite methodically; we have discerned what can supply what is lacking in the kidneys; and we have erected a bridge that can be followed step by step, from pathology to therapy.

Now let us take another case. Suppose we have to do with some disturbance of the digestive system — such as we usually include under the word ‘dyspepsia.’ If we again proceed according to Spiritual Science, we shall discover that here we have to do principally with a faulty and inadequate working of the Ego-organisation. Why is the Ego-organisation not acting strongly enough? That is the question. And we must search somewhere in the functional regions of the human organism for what it is that is causing this weakness of the Ego-organisation. In certain cases we find that the fault lies in the gallbladder secretions. If that is so, then we must come to the assistance of the Ego-organisation (just as we came to the assistance of the kidneys with the equisetum) by administering something which, if it reaches the required spot by being prepared in a certain way, will there strengthen the inadequate working of the Ego-organisation. Thus, even as we find that the silicic acid process (which lies at the root of the nerves-and-senses system) when introduced in the right way to the kidneys enhances their sense-faculty, so we now find that such a process as the gall-bladder secretions (which corresponds primarily with the Ego-organisation) is really connected in quite a special manner (also in relation to other

things) with the action of carbon. Now a remarkable thing to be observed is that if we wish to introduce carbon into the organism in the correct way for treating dyspepsia, we find that carbon — (though it is contained in *every* plant) — is contained in *chichorium intybus* (chicory) in a form that directly affects the gall-bladder. When we know how to make the correct preparation from *chicorium intybus*, we can lead it over into the functions of this organ as a certain form of carbon-process, in the same way as is done with regard to the silicic-acid process and the kidneys.

With these simple examples — which are applicable either to slight or in certain circumstances to very severe cases of illness — I have tried to indicate how, by a spiritual-scientific observation of the human organism on the one hand, and on the other of the different natural creations and their respective interchanges with each other, there can be brought about firstly an understanding of the processes of illness, and secondly an understanding of what is required in order to reverse the direction of those processes. Healing becomes thereby a penetrating Art. This is what can be achieved for the art of medicine, the art of Healing, by the kind of scientific research that is called Anthroposophy. There is nothing of the nature of fantasy about it. It is that which will bring research to the point of extreme exactitude with regard to the observation of the whole human being, both physically, psychically and spiritually. The condition of illness in man depends upon the

respective activity of the physical, the psychic and the spiritual. And because man's constitution consists of nerves and senses system, rhythmic system, metabolic and limb system, we are enabled also to penetrate into the different processes and their degrees of activity. We learn to know how a sense-function is present in the kidneys as soon as we direct our attention to the essential nature of sense-functions; otherwise, we only seek to discover sense-functions under their cruder aspect as they appear in the senses themselves. Now however, we become able to comprehend illness as such.

I have already said that in the metabolic and limb system processes take place which are the opposite of those that take place in the system of nerves and senses. But it can happen that processes which primarily are also nerves and senses processes, and are, for instance, proper to the nerves of the head where they are 'normal' — it can happen that these processes can in a certain sense become dislodged by the metabolic and limb system; that through an abnormality of the astral body and Ego-organisation in the metabolic-limb-system something can happen which would be ' correct' or 'normal' only if taking place in the system of nerves and senses. That is to say, what is right for *one* system can be in *another* system productive of metamorphosis or disease. So that a process which properly belongs, for instance, to the system of nerves and senses makes its appearance in

another system, and is then a process of disease. An example of this is found in *typhoid fever*. Typhoid represents a process which belongs properly to the nervous system. While it should play its part there in the *physical organisation*, it plays its part as a matter of fact in the region of the metabolic system within the *etheric organisation* — within the etheric body — works over into the physical body and appears there as typhoid. Here we see into the nature of the onset of illness. Or it can also happen that the dynamic force, or those forces which are active in a sense-organ — (and must be active there in a certain degree in order that a sense-organ as such may arise) — become active somewhere where they should not. That which works in a sense-organ can be in some way or another transformed in its activity elsewhere. Let us take the activity of the ear. Instead of remaining in the system of nerves and senses, it obtrudes itself (and this under circumstances which can also be described) in another place — for example in the metabolic system where this is connected with the rhythmic system. Then there arises, in the wrong place, an abnormal tendency to produce a sense-organ; and this manifests itself as *carcinoma* — as a cancerous growth. It is only when we can look in this way into the human organism that we can perceive that carcinoma represents a certain tendency, displaced in respect of the systems, to the *formation of a sense organ*.

When we speak of the fertilisation of medicine through

Anthroposophy, it is a question of learning how abnormal conditions in the human organism arise from the fact that what is normal to one system transplants itself into another. And only by perceiving the matter thus is one in a position really to understand the human organism in its healthy and diseased states, and so to make the bridge from pathology to therapy, from observation of the patient to healing the patient.

When these things are represented as a connected whole, it will be seen how nothing that is said from this standpoint can in any way contradict modern medicine. As a first step in this direction I hope that very soon now the book [*Fundamentals of Therapy*, by Dr. Rudolf Steiner and Dr. Ita Wegman. (Anthroposophical Publishing Co.) Price 7/6.] will be published that has been written by me in collaboration with Dr. Wegman, the Director of the Clinical and Therapeutic Institute at Arlesheim. This book will present what can be given from the spiritual-scientific standpoint, not as a contradiction of modern medicine but as an extension of it. People will then be able to convince themselves that it has nothing to do with the kind of superficiality which is so prevalent to-day. This book will show, in a way that will be justified by modern science, the fruitfulness that can enter into the art of healing by means of spiritual scientific investigation. Precisely when these things can be followed up more and more in detail and with scientific conscientiousness, will those efforts be acknowledged which are being made by such an Institution as the International

laboratories of Arlesheim, where a whole range of new remedies is being prepared in accordance with the principles here set forth.

In the third lecture it will be my endeavour to consolidate still further (in so far as that can be done here in a popular manner), what has already been indicated as a rational therapy, by citing certain special cases of illness and the way in which they can be cured. Anyone who can really perceive what is meant will certainly not have any fear that the things stated cannot be subjected to serious test. We know that it will be the same in this as in all other domains of Anthroposophy; to begin with, there will be rebuffs, abuse and criticism by those who do not know it in detail. But those who do learn to know it in detail will stop their abuse. Therefore, in my third lecture I will go more into the particulars which will show that we are not evading modern science but are in full agreement with it, and that we proceed from the desire to enlarge the boundaries of science by spiritual knowledge in the sphere of anthroposophical medicine.

Only when this is understood will the art of healing stand upon its true foundations. For the art of healing concerns *man*. Man is a being of body, soul and Spirit. A real medicine can therefore only exist when it penetrates into a knowledge which embraces man in respect of all three — in respect of body, soul and Spirit.

III

Arnheim, Holland, 24th July, 1924

IN the first two lectures I dealt with the general principles by means of which the knowledge of healing can be made fruitful through anthroposophical research, and to-day I would like to enlarge upon this by giving certain details — such details as will at the same time show that in so far as Anthroposophy works into practical life, it will lead also to a “handling,” if I may use the expression, of life as a whole which will be in accordance with reality.

In the previous lectures I spoke of the way in which Anthroposophy must necessarily regard the constitution of the *physical body* which we know by means of our senses, but the substance of which is continually being thrown off and newly constructed during the course of life. Within this physical body lives the so-called *etheric* or *life-body,* which contains the forces of growth and of nourishment and which man possesses in common with the plants. We must also recognise that man is the bearer of *sentient* life — that life which inwardly reflects the outer world. This is the *astral body.* (As I said before, we need not take exception to the terminology but simply accept it in the sense in which it is here explained.) Man has this astral body in common with the animal kingdom, but he excels all other kingdoms of Nature in

the surrounding world inasmuch as he possesses the *Ego-organisation.*

If we merely speak of these constituent parts of the human being in a general way, we shall never come to the point of being able to estimate them at their true value. If, however, we perceive the real significance of these four members of our being, then we have no longer a mere philosophically conceived classification, or a mere division of phenomena before us, and we realise that such a conception really adds something to our comprehension of the being of man. We need only consider a daily event of human life — the interchange of waking and sleeping — and we shall at once understand the significance of this threefold constitution.

Every day we observe the human being passing from that condition wherein he has an inner impulse to move his limbs and when he takes in the impressions of the outer world so that he may work them over within himself, into that other condition where he lies motionless in sleep and his consciousness (if it does not rise to the point of dream) sinks down into an inner, indefinite darkness. If we refuse to admit that the functions of willing, feeling and thinking are annihilated in sleep and simply appear again when he wakes, we must ask ourselves: What *is* the relation of waking man to sleeping man ?

During sleep, the astral body and Ego-organisation have separated from the physical body and the etheric body. As soon as we have realised that the astral body and Ego-organisation — the soul-and-Spirit — separate from man's physical organisation during sleep, we come to something else, namely, that this radical extraction during sleep can also occur in a lesser degree — partially — during the waking state. Certain conditions call forth a certain tendency to sleep but do not bring about total sleep — I mean conditions of faintness, unconsciousness and the like. These are conditions in which the human being commences to sleep but does not achieve it completely; he hovers, as it were, between sleeping and waking.

In order to understand such conditions we must be able to look into the nature of the human being. We must remind ourselves of what was said in the last lecture when the results of anthroposophical research were explained. I said that it is possible to divide the whole organisation of man into three systems: (1) the nerves and senses; (2) the rhythmic system (which includes all rhythmical processes); (3) metabolic-limb system. I also said that the metabolic-limb system is the polar antithesis of the system of nerves and senses, while the rhythmic system is the mediator between the two. Each of these three systems is permeated by the four members of man's being — physical body, etheric body, astral body and Ego-organisation. Now the constitution of man is very

complicated. It cannot be said that in sleep the astral body and Ego-organisation pass entirely out of the physical and etheric bodies. It can so happen that the organism of nerves and senses is only *partially* forsaken by the higher principles. Then, because the system of nerves and senses has its main seat in the head, the head is constrained to develop something which gives an inclination towards sleep. Yet the man is not really asleep, for his metabolic-limb system and his rhythmic system still contain the astral body and Ego-organisation. These have only left the *head.* Hence there arises a state of dullness, or faintness, while the rest of the organism functions as in waking life. What I have here described does not necessarily arise from within; it can occur when something is applied from without — for instance if a certain quantity of lead is administered or lead combined with some other substance. Comatose states or vertigo, which are caused by the separation of the astral body and Ego-organisation from the head, can be brought about by the administration of certain quantities of lead. We see, therefore, that this substance, this lead, when it is taken inwardly, drives the astral body and Ego out of the head. Here we look deeply into the human organisation in its relation to the surrounding world; we see in this way that it can become dependent upon what is taken in by way of substance.

But now let us suppose that a person exhibits the opposite condition — that his astral body and Ego cling too firmly to his

head, work too strongly upon it. This becomes clear to us when we examine how the head-organisation works upon the whole man, when we study how the organism builds itself up. We see all the hard parts forming themselves — the bony structures; we see the other softer parts, the muscles and so on. If we study man's whole development from childhood onwards, we find that that part of the organism which shows us, first by its outer shape how it inclines towards ossification, and has its essential nature in its bony consistency — namely the *head* — we find that the head throws out, during the course of its development, precisely those forces which work formatively in respect of the whole skeleton and which therefore tend to harden and stiffen the human being. We gradually come to know what tasks the Ego-organisation and astral body perform when they permeate the head; they work in such a way that the forces which harden man inwardly, which cause the hard parts of his being to separate from the more fluid organisation, stream out from his head. Now if the astral body and the Ego-organisation work too strongly in the head, the hardening forces stream out too vigorously and the result is what we see in the *ageing* organisation, when a tendency to bone-formation is present. This tendency manifests as arterio-sclerosis, where chalky deposits are present in the arteries. In sclerosis the stiffening, hardening principle, which otherwise works into the bones, works into the whole organism. We have therefore an excessively strong working of the Ego-organisation and the astral body; they

impress themselves too deeply into the organism.

At this point the conception of the astral body begins to be a very real factor. For, if we administer lead to the organism in its normal condition, we drive the astral body and Ego out of the head. But if these principles are too closely bound to the head and we give a proper dose of lead, we are acting rightly because then we loosen the astral forces and the Ego to some extent from the head and thus we can combat sclerosis. Here we see how external influences can work upon this connection of the different members of man's being. If we administer lead to the healthy organism, we can bring it to the point of illness; comatose conditions or faintness are caused because the astral body and the Ego are separated from it, giving rise to a condition which in the ordinary course of events is only there in sleep. If, however, the astral body and the Ego are too closely united with the head, the human being is over-wakeful and the effect of this continued over-wakefulness is an inward hardening. The ultimate consequence will be sclerosis and in this case the right thing to do is to drive the astral body and the Ego slightly out of the lead. Thus we begin to understand the inner working of the remedy directly we take the different members of man's being into account.

Now let us turn to the metabolic-limb system. When we are sound asleep, our astral body and Ego have separated from

this system. But we can drive them out of this system *without* driving them out of the head; just as we drive them out of the head by means of lead and cause comatose conditions, etc., so by giving a certain dosage of *silver* or some combination of silver, we can drive the astral body and Ego out of the metabolic-limb system. We then get corresponding manifestations in the digestion — solidifying of the excreta and other disturbances of the digestive tract.

But suppose the astral body and Ego are working too actively in the digestive organs. Now the astral body and Ego stimulate the digestive functions precisely *in* the metabolic-limb system. If they work too strongly, penetrate too deeply, then there is excessive digestive activity. There is a tendency to diarrhoea and other kindred symptoms which are the result of too rapid and superficial digestion.

Now this is connected with something else, namely that in this condition the metabolic-limb system comes too much to the fore. In the human organism everything works together. If the metabolic-limb system predominates, it also works too strongly — works moreover not only on the rhythmic organisation but also on the head-organisation, principally, however, on the former; for the digestive organisation continues on into the rhythmic system. The products of digestion are transformed in the blood. The rhythm of the blood is dependent upon what enters it by way of material

substances. If, then, there is excessive activity on the part of the astral body and Ego, symptoms of fever and a rise of temperature will occur. Now if we know that the astral body and the Ego-organisation are driven out of the metabolic-limb system by the administration of a certain dosage of silver, we know further that if the astral organism and the Ego-organisation are too deeply embedded in the metabolic-limb system, we can raise them out of the latter by giving a remedy consisting of silver or silver combined with some other substance.

This shows us how we can master these connections within the being of man. Spiritual Science therefore makes researches into the whole of Nature. In the last lecture [See *Anthroposophy,* Midsummer, 1928.] I attempted to show, in principle, how this can be done in respect of the plants. To-day I have explained how it can be done in respect of two mineral substances, lead and silver. We gain an insight into the relation between the human organism and its surroundings by directing our attention to the manner in which these different substances in the outer world affect the different members of the constitution of man.

We will now take an example which shows that it is possible, out of an inner insight into the nature of the activity of the human organisation, to pass from the realm of pathology to an understanding of therapy.

We have a certain remedy continually present within us. The being of man requires healing all the time. The natural inclination is always for the Ego-organisation and the astral body to press too strongly into the physical body and the etheric body. Man would prefer to look out into the world, not clearly, but always more or less dully; he would prefer to be always at rest. As a matter of fact, he suffers from a constant illness: the ‘desire to rest.’ He must be cured of this, for he is only well if his organism is constantly being cured. For the purpose of this cure, he has *iron in the blood.*

Iron is a metal which works on the organism in such a way that the astral body and Ego are prevented from being too strongly bound to the physical and etheric bodies. There is really a continual healing going on within man, an ’ iron-cure.’ The moment the human organism contains too little iron, there is a longing for rest, a feeling of slackness. Directly there is too much iron, an involuntary over-activity and restlessness sets in. Iron regulates the connection between physical body and etheric body on the one hand, and the astral body and Ego-organisation on the other. Therefore if there is any disturbance of this connection it may be said that an increase or a decrease of the iron-content in the organism will restore the right relation.

Now let us observe a certain kind of illness that is not of particular importance in medicine. We can quite well

understand why not. It is, to begin with, apparently so intricate that its cause is not easy to discover. And so every possible kind of remedy is given for this illness, to which, as I have said, medicine gives little heed although it is very unpleasant for the sufferer — I mean *migraine.*

In the head-organisation we observe, first of all, the continuations of the sense-nerves which are most wonderfully intertwined and interwoven. The nerves as they continue on into the centre of the brain from the senses, form a marvellous structure. It represents the highest point of perfection in respect of the physical organisation, for there the Ego of man impresses the most intense form of its activity upon the physical body. The way in which the nerves pass inwards from the senses and are linked together, bringing about something like an inner articulation within the organism, places the human organism at a much higher level than the animal. And it is possible, just because the Ego-organisation must take hold at this point in order to control this marvellous structure, that it may occasionally fail and then that part of the physical organisation gets left to itself. It may happen that the Ego-organisation is not powerful enough to permeate this so-called “white matter” of the brain or to organise it thoroughly.

Now the white matter of the brain is surrounded by the grey matter — a substance which is far less delicately organised but which is indeed regarded by ordinary physiology as being

the more important of the two. This it is not, for the reason that it is connected much more with nutrition. We have a far more mobile activity in respect of nutrition — of inner accumulation of substance — in the grey brain-matter, than in the white matter which lies in the middle and which in a much greater degree is a foundation for the Spiritual.

Now everything in the human organism belongs together, for every member works upon every other. Directly, therefore, that the Ego begins to withdraw to some extent from the central — the white brain-substance — the grey matter becomes disordered. The astral body and the etheric body can no longer take proper hold of the grey matter; and so the whole of the interior of the head gets out of order. The Ego-organisation withdraws from the central brain, the astral organisation withdraws more from the periphery of the brain; and the whole organisation of the head is dislocated. The central brain begins to be less serviceable for the forming of concepts, more akin to the grey matter, developing a kind of digestive process which it ought not to do; the grey matter begins to unfold an excessively strong digestive process. And then foreign bodies are absorbed; a strong excretory process permeates the brain. All this reacts upon the finer breathing processes, principally, however, upon the rhythmic processes of the blood-circulation. Thus we get, not perhaps a very deeply penetrating, but still a very significant disorder arising in the human organism and the question is: How are we to

restore the Ego-organisation to the system of nerves and senses? How are we to drive the Ego back again to the place it has left — into the central part of the brain ?

This we can do if we administer a substance of which I spoke in the earlier lectures, namely, *silicic acid.* If, however, we were to give *only* silicic acid, we should, it is true, send back the Ego into the central nerves-and-senses system in the head, but we should leave the surrounding part, *i.e.,* the grey matter of the brain, untouched. Thus we must at the same time so regulate the digestive process of the grey matter that it no longer ' overflows,' that it incorporates itself rhythmically into the whole organisation of the human being. Therefore we must simultaneously administer *iron* — which is there in order to regulate these connections — so that the rhythmic organisation shall be placed once more in its right relation to the system lying at the basis of spiritual activity.

At the same time, however, there will be irregularities in the ' digestive ' processes in the larger brain. In the organism, nothing takes place in one system of organs without influencing others. Therefore in this case, slight and delicate disorders will arise in the digestive system as a whole. Once more, if we study the connections between outer substances and the human organism, we find that *sulphur* and combinations of sulphur work in such a way that starting from the digestive system they bring about a regularising of the

whole process of digestion.

We have now three standpoints from which migraine can be considered: (1) regulation of the digestion, the disorder of which is evident in the irregular digestive process of the brain; (2) regulation of the nervous and sensory activity of the Ego by means of silicic acid; (3) regulation of the disordered rhythm of the circulatory system by the administration of iron. In this way we are able to survey the whole process. As I have said, migraine is an ailment somewhat despised by ordinary medicine but it is by no means so complicated as it appears when we really penetrate into the nature of the human organism. Indeed we discover that the organism itself calls upon us to administer a preparation of silicic acid, sulphur and iron — combined in a certain way. We then obtain a remedy for migraine (Biodoron) which, however, also has the effect of regulating the influence of the Ego-organisation, causing it to take hold of the organism and to work upon everything of the nature of disturbed rhythm in the blood-circulation and also upon all that is taking place as the out-streaming digestive process in the organism.

Migraine is only a symptom of the fact that the etheric body, astral body and Ego are not working properly in the physical body. Therefore our remedy for migraine is peculiarly adapted to restore the co-operation of these three higher principles with the physical. When these members are not working

properly together, our remedy — which is not a mere ‘cure for headache’ — can help a patient under all circumstances. It is a remedy for migraine just because it attacks the most radical symptoms; and it is especially by speaking of *this* remedy that I can make clear to you the anthroposophical principles of therapy, the essential nature of illness and how to prepare a medicament.

Before such remedies can be prepared we must understand the relationship that exists between the human organism and the surrounding world. But for this it is necessary to approach the study of the nature of this relationship in all seriousness. In the last lecture, in indicating how we arrive at plant-remedies, I mentioned *equisetum arvensæ* as an example. We can say of every plant that it works in such and such a way on this or that organ. But as we study these things we must be quite clear that a plant — growing here or there in Nature — is not at all the same in Spring as it is in Autumn. In Spring we have a sprouting and growing plant before us — a plant that contains the physical and ethereal forces just as man contains them. If, then, we administer a substance from this plant to the organism we shall be able to produce an especially strong effect upon the physical body and etheric body. If, however, we leave the plant growing all through the Summer and pluck it when Autumn is drawing near, then we have a plant which is on the point of drying up and shrivelling.

Now let us look again at the human organism. Throughout the development of the physical body there is a budding and sprouting caused by the working of the etheric body. The astral body and the Ego-organisation cause disintegration. All the time in the physical body there is a budding and sprouting life, caused by the etheric body. If this process alone were to take place in the human being, he would never be able to unfold self-consciousness; for the more the growth-forces are stimulated, the more this budding and sprouting takes place, the more we lack self-possession. When the astral organism and Ego-organisation separate from the other two members in sleep, we are unconscious. The forces which build man up, which cause growth and give rise to the process of nutrition do not bring him to the point where he can feel and think. On the contrary, to be able to feel and think, something in the organism must be destroyed. This is the work of the astral body and the Ego-organisation. They bring about a continual Autumn in man. The physical organisation and etheric body bring about a continual Spring — a budding and sprouting life — but no self-consciousness, nothing of the nature of soul and Spirit. The astral body and the Ego-organisation *destroy;* they cause the physical body to dry up and harden. But this has to be. The physical body has continually to oscillate between integration and disintegration. Outside in Nature we find the forces alternating between Spring and Autumn. In man too, there is rhythm; while he is asleep, it is wholly Spring for him — the physical and etheric bodies bud and blossom;

when he is awake the forces of the physical and etheric bodies are thrust back, hemmed in, and conscious self-possession sets in — Autumn and Winter are there.

By this we can see how superficial it is to base our judgments merely on outer analogies. External observation might well result in describing the waking life of man as ' Spring ' and ' Summer ' and in speaking of sleep as analogous to Winter. But in reality this is not correct. When we fall asleep, the astral body and the Ego pass out and the physical-etheric part of our being begins to bud and blossom; the forces of the etheric body are very active. It is a condition of Spring and Summer. If we could look back upon our physical and etheric bodies and observe what is going on when the astral body and Ego have forsaken them, we should be able to describe this budding and sprouting, and the moment of waking would seem to be like the approach of Autumn. But this, of course, requires the faculty of spiritual perception. It cannot be seen with physical eyes.

Now let us imagine that we are looking for plant-remedies. *Gentians* gathered in the Spring will have a healing influence on certain forms of dyspepsia. If we gather the plant in the Spring and then prepare it as a medicament, we shall be able to work upon disturbed forces of nutrition. The roots of the gentian should be boiled and given in order to regulate the forces of nutrition. But if we give gentian roots that have been

dug up in the Autumn when the plant as a whole is decaying, when its forces will resemble the functions performed by the astral body, we shall not effect any cure; on the contrary, we shall rather increase the irregularity in the digestive process. It is not enough simply to know that any particular plant is a remedy for this or that ailment; we must also know *when* the plant must be gathered if it is to act as a remedy.

We must therefore observe the whole being and becoming of Nature if we are to apply effective plant-remedies and develop a rational therapy. We must also know in making up our preparations that it is not the same to gather the plants in the Autumn as to gather and administer them in the Spring. When we are preparing medicaments we must also learn to know what it means if we pick gentian, for instance, in the first weeks of the month of May; for what man bears within him during the course of twenty-four hours, namely Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, is spread in Nature over a period of 365 days. The process which is enacted in the human being in a period of 24 hours, needs 365 days in Nature.

By this you will see what is involved when we speak of applying anthroposophical principles to therapy. At the present time we have a very serviceable science of healing, and as I have said again and again, what Anthroposophy has to give in respect of an art of healing must certainly not come

into opposition with what is given by the recognised medicine of to-day. Anthroposophical medicine will stand firmly on the foundations of modern medical science in so far as these foundations are justified. But something more has to be added, namely *spiritual insight into the being of man.*

Consider once more what I have said in these lectures about the system of nerves and senses being permeated by all four members — by the physical body, etheric body, astral body and Ego. The metabolic-limb system is also permeated by all four members. But each system is permeated by the other members in a different way. In the metabolic-limb system, the Ego-organisation functions in the activity of *will.* Everything that causes man and his whole organism to *move* is contained in the metabolic-limb system; everything that leaves him at rest and fills him with inner experiences, concepts, thoughts and feelings, is contained in the system of nerves and senses. An essential difference is shown here. In the system of nerves and senses, the physical body and etheric body are of far greater importance than the Ego and astral organisations, while in the metabolic-limb system it is these higher members that are essential. Therefore if the Ego and astral body work too strongly in the nerves and senses, something will arise which this latter system then drives into the other members of the being of man.

Over-emphasis of the Ego and astral organisations within

the nerves and senses drives this latter system somehow or other into the metabolic-limb system. There are various ways in which this may take place; the result is what may — in a very general sense — be described as ’ swellings.’ We learn to understand the nature of these swellings when we realise that because of excessive activity of the Ego or the astral body, the system of nerves and senses is driven into the rest of the organism.

And now consider the opposite condition: the Ego and astral body *withdraw* from the metabolic-limb system; the physical and etheric organisations become too strong — they radiate into the system of nerves and senses and flood it with those processes which properly belong to the metabolic-limb system: the result is an *inflammatory condition.* Now we can understand that swellings and conditions of inflammation present a certain polaric contrast to one another. If, then, we know how to drive back the system of nerves and senses when it is beginning to be active somewhere in the metabolic-limb system, we shall arrive at a possible means of healing.

Now one instance where the system of nerves and senses is working with terrible consequences in some region of the metabolic-limb system, is *carcinoma.* Here there is evidence that the system of nerves and senses has entered into the metabolic-limb organisation and is making itself effective there. In my second lecture I spoke of a tendency to the

formation of a sense-organ which can arise at the wrong place, within the metabolic-limb system. The ear, when it is formed in the right place, is normal; but if a tendency to ear-formation or a tendency to form any other sense-organ — even in the very slightest degree — occurs in the wrong place, then we have to do with carcinomatous growth. We must work against this tendency of the human organism, but a very deep understanding of the whole of the evolution of the world and man is necessary here.

If you study anthroposophical literature, you will find that it gives quite different teaching in regard to cosmology to that given by materialistic science. You will find it stated that the creation of our Earth was preceded by another creation when man did not as yet exist in his present form, but was, in certain respects, still spiritually higher than the animal kingdom. The senses of man, as we know them, did not exist. They only arose in their perfected state during Earth-evolution. As *tendencies,* of course, they were there long before, but in their final form, as they now are, penetrated by the Ego organisation, they did not come into being until the Earth was formed. The human Ego ‘shot,’ as it were, into eyes, ears and the other senses during this period. Hence if the Ego-organisation becomes too active, a sense does not only form in the organism in a normal way but there is too great a general tendency to create senses. This results in carcinoma. What, then, must we do in order to discover a

remedy for this disease? We must go back to earlier conditions of Earth-development and search for something that is a last remnant, a heritage, from earlier periods of evolution. We find such a remnant in plants that are parasitic — such as *viscum*: forms that grow as the mistletoe grows upon trees — forms that have not come to the point of being able to root themselves in the Earth as such but must feed upon what is *living.* Why must they do this? Because they have, as a matter of fact, evolved before our Earth assumed its solid, mineral form. We have in mistletoe to-day something that could not become a pure Earth-form; it had to take root upon a *plant* of another character — because the *mineral* kingdom was the latest of the kingdoms to evolve upon the Earth. In the substance of mistletoe we have something which, if it is prepared in the proper way, will have a beneficial effect upon carcinoma and work in the direction of driving the misplaced formation of a sense-organ out of the human organism.

If we penetrate into Nature, it is possible to fight against those things which, appearing in the form of some illness, have fallen away from their normal evolution. Man is too much ‘ Earth ’ when he develops cancer; he brings forth the Earth-forces too strongly within his being. We must combat these exaggerated Earth-forces with something that is the result of a state of evolution when the mineral kingdom and the present Earth were not yet in existence. Therefore, working on the

basis of anthroposophical research, we make a special preparation from *viscum.*

I have now put certain brief details before you. I could add a great deal more, for we have already worked out and produced a number of remedies. Let me, for example, mention the following. If the metabolic system radiates into the extreme periphery of the senses-organisation, a certain form of illness is produced — so-called *hay-fever.* And here we have the opposite of what I described just now. When the system of nerves and senses slips downwards so to speak into the metabolic-limb system, this gives rise to swellings. On the other hand, if the metabolic-limb system enters into the region of nerves and senses, we get such manifestations as are present, for example, in hay-fever. In this case it is a question of paralysing those centrifugal processes where the metabolic-limb system is induced too strongly towards the periphery of the organism, by giving something which will stem back the etheric forces. We try to do this with a preparation (Gencydo) made from fruits which are covered with rind; the forces connected with this rind-formation have the effect of driving back the etheric forces in the metabolism. The excessively active *centrifugal* forces which give rise to hay-fever are combated by strong *centripetal* forces. Both the pathological and therapeutical processes can be quite clearly perceived. And indeed we find that the best results are obtained with our remedies precisely in those cases that are

the most resistant to treatment at the present time. Instances of the treatment of hay-fever show that excellent results have been obtained.

And so I could give you many details to show that the insight into the nature of man which is gained by anthroposophical research builds the bridge between pathology and therapy. For how, in the last resort, do the Ego and astral organism work? *They destroy.* And because of this destructive process we are beings of *soul and Spirit.* When something is being disintegrated, a purely *poisonous* activity is taking place and that destroys the organs. If an organ becomes rampant or hypertrophied, we must disintegrate it. The disintegrative activity belongs to the astral body and Ego. Poisons in an external form — they may be either metallic or vegetable poisons — are, in their effect upon the human organism, related to the astral body and Ego. We must realise to what extent a poisonous process is taking place in the human organism inasmuch as the Ego and astral body are at work. There is a correspondence between the budding and sprouting forces of the plants — which we eat without harm — and the physical and etheric forces in the human being; and we must learn to recognise the correspondence between the activity of the Ego and the astral body upon the human organism and the working of the forces and substances of those plants which we cannot eat because they are harmful but which, because they resemble the normally destructive

processes in man, can work as remedies.

Thus we learn to divide the whole of Nature, firstly into those forms of life which resemble our physical and etheric bodies and which we eat for the purposes of growth and development; and secondly into the destructive elements, *i.e.,* the poisonous forces which resemble the working of astral body and Ego-organisation. If we understand the four members of man's being in this sense, we shall regard the polarity between the nutritious substances and the poisonous substances quite differently. The study of illness will then be a continuation of the study of Nature. By an insight into both health and disease — a spiritual insight — our whole conception of Nature will be immeasurably enriched. But there is one condition attached to such study. In our present age, people prefer to embark upon some particular study when the object in question is quite still. They like to bring this object as far as possible into a state of complete rest so that the longest possible time can be spent in observing it. Anthroposophy, on the contrary, prefers that whatever is being studied should be as far as possible in a state of movement; everything must be mobile and living, observed in the presence of *Spirit,* for only so do we draw near to life and reality. To this we must add something else, and that is the *courage to heal.* This courage is just as necessary as the actual knowledge of how to heal; it is not nebulous or fantastic optimism but a feeling of certainty which makes us feel in any case of illness: 'I have insight into

this and I will try to cure it.’ Great things result from this. But if we are to gain this certainty, it is above all necessary to have the courage to win through to an understanding of the being of man and of Nature. Naturally, therefore, the kind of remedies that we obtain can only come from a living contact with medicine.

Close to the Goetheanum, where we are striving for anthroposophical knowledge which shall satisfy the souls of men, there is a centre which is devoted to healing — near to the Mystery-centre, a therapeutical centre, because a comprehensive knowledge of the relation between the human being and the world must include not only an understanding of the healing processes but also of the processes of disease. A profound insight into the Cosmos is only possible when we are able to survey not only the tendencies which lead to sickness but equally those which lead to health.

If the forces connected with growth in the organism were not continually being repressed, man’s being of soul and Spirit could never function. The very manifestations which in the normal condition of mankind turn to illness, to retrogression of development, must indeed exist in order that he may become a thinking being. If man could not be ill, he could not be a spiritual being. If the functions of thinking, feeling and willing manifest in an abnormal form, man falls ill. The liver and kidneys must carry out the very same processes that give rise

to thinking, to feeling and to willing; but these processes lead to disease when they arise in exaggerated form. The fact that man can be ill makes it also possible for him to be a being who can think, feel and will.

Anthroposophical science can enrich the science of healing with spiritual knowledge as I have shown; but it can also do so because it fills the doctor with devotion and readiness for self-sacrifice. Anthroposophy not only deepens our thinking, our intellectuality, but also our feeling — indeed our whole nature. The answer to the question: What can the Art of Healing gain through Spiritual Science? is this: the doctor, as a healer, can become *wholly man*; not merely one who thinks about a case of illness with his head but who has inner realisation of the state of illness, knowing that to heal is a noble mission. The doctor will only find the right place for his profession in the social order when he perceives that illness is the shadow-side of spiritual development. In order to understand the shadow he must also gaze upon the light — upon the nature and the being of the spiritual processes themselves. If the doctor learns thus to behold spiritual processes, to behold the light that is working in the being of man, he will be able to judge of the shadow. Wherever there is light, there must be shadow; wherever there is spiritual development there must be manifestations of illness as its shadow-forms. Only he can master them who can truly gaze upon the light.

This, then, is what Anthroposophy can give to the doctor and to the art of healing.

Abridged Report of Two Lectures

WHATEVER may arise in course of time from anthroposophy, in regard to the sphere of medical knowledge, it will not be found to be in any disagreement whatsoever with that which is understood to-day as the orthodox scientific study of medicine. It is easy, in looking at the question from the scientific standpoint, to be deceived about this, because from the outset it is supposed that any study which is not founded upon so-called exact proof, must be of the nature of sectarianism, and cannot therefore be taken seriously by the scientific observer.

For this reason it is necessary to remark that it is just that point of view which seeks to support medicine upon an anthroposophical basis, which is the most appreciative of, and the most sympathetic towards all that is best and greatest in modern medical achievements.

There cannot therefore be any question that the following statements are merely the polemics of dilettantism, or unprofessionalism, leveled against recognised methods of healing. The whole question turns solely upon the fact that during the last few centuries our entire world-conception has assumed a form which is limited by investigation only into those things which can be confirmed by the senses — either by means of experiment, or by direct observation — and which are then brought into relation with one another through

those powers of human reasoning which rely upon the testimony of the senses alone.

This method of research was nevertheless entirely justifiable during several hundred years, because if it had been otherwise, mankind would have become immersed in a world of dreams and fantasies, would have been forced to a capricious acceptance of things, and to a barren weaving of hypotheses.

That is connected with the fact that man, as he lives in the world between birth and death, is a being who cannot truly know himself by means of his physical senses and his reason alone — because he is just as much a spiritual as a physical being.

So that when we come to speak of man in health and in disease we can do no less than ask ourselves: Is it possible to gain a knowledge of health and disease *only* by those methods of research which concern the physical body; purely with the assistance of the senses and the reason, or by the use of instruments which extend the faculties of the senses and enable us to carry out experiments?

We shall find that a real, unprejudiced, historical retrospect shows us that the knowledge which mankind has gained originated from something totally different from these mere sense-observations. There lies behind us an immense

development of our spiritual life, no less than of our physical.

Some three thousand years ago, during the flowering of the most ancient Greek culture, there existed schools that were very different from those of to-day. The basis of these ancient schools consisted in the belief that man had first of all to develop new faculties in his soul before he could become capable of attaining to true knowledge concerning mankind.

Now it was just because, in these ancient times, the more primitive soul-faculties did not incline towards the fantastic, that it was possible to experience, in the so-called mysteries, the spiritual foundations from which all forms of learning arose.

This state of things came to an end more or less contemporaneously with the founding of our Universities — during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. Since that time we learn only in a rationalistic way. Rationalism leads on the one hand to keen logic, and on the other hand to pure materialism.

During the course of centuries a vast store of external knowledge has been accumulated in the domain of biology, physiology, and other branches of research which are introductory to the study of medicine; indeed an amazing mass of observations, out of which an almost immeasurable amount may yet be obtained!

But during these centuries all knowledge connected with man which could not be gained without spiritual vision, sank completely out of sight.

It has therefore become actually impossible to investigate the true nature of health and disease.

In order to emphasise this remark, I may mention that even at the present time (according to the descriptions given in my books [*Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, *An Outline Of Occult Science*, etc. *e.Ed*] it is possible so to raise the faculties of the soul that the spiritual nature of man may be clearly distinguished from the physical, This spiritual part of man is, for the spiritual observer, just as visible as the physical part is for the man who observes with his outer senses; with this difference, however, that our ordinary senses have been and are incorporated into our bodily organism without our co-operation, whereas we must *ourselves* develop the organs of spiritual sight.

This can be brought about if one unfolds within oneself an earnest life of thought. Such a state of living, of resting in quietude — in thought — must, however, be carried out so as to bring about a methodical education and transformation of the soul. If one can, so to say, experiment for a time with one's own soul, allowing it to rest within an easily grasped thought, at the same time permitting neither any traces of

auto-suggestion nor any diminution of consciousness to arise, and if one in this way exercises the soul as one would exercise a muscle, then the soul grows strong. Methodically, one pursues the exercises further and further; the soul grows stronger, grows powerful, and becomes *capable of sight.*

The first thing that it sees is that the human being actually does not consist merely of physical body, which can be investigated either with the naked eye or with a microscope, and so forth, but that he also bears an etheric body. This is not to be confused with that which, in earlier scientific times, was somewhat amateurishly described as “vital forces.” It is something that can really be perceived and observed; and if I were to distinguish qualitatively between the physical body and the etheric body, I should choose, out of all the innumerable qualitative distinctions that exist, the following: — The physical body of man is subject to the laws of gravity; it tends to be drawn earthward. The etheric body tends to be drawn towards the periphery of the universe; that is to say, outwards, in all directions. As a rule, our investigations are concerned with the relative weight of things, but that part of the human organism which possesses weight is the direct opposite of that which not only has no weight but which strives to escape from the laws of gravitation. We have in us these two opposing forces.

This is the first of our super-physical bodies. We may say,

then, that we have within us first of all the physical man, whose orientation is centripetal and tends earthwards, and another man, whose orientation is centrifugal and tends to leave the earth. It will be seen that a balance must be maintained between these two configurations of the human being — between the heavy physical body, which is subject to the laws of gravity, and the other, the etheric body, which strives outwards towards the farthest limits of the universe.

The etheric body seeks, as it were, to imitate, to be an image of the whole Cosmos; but the physical body rounds it off, and keeps it within its own limits.

Therefore, by contemplating the state of balance between the physical body and the etheric body, our perception of the nature of the human being becomes real and penetrating. Once we have succeeded in recognising these outward-streaming centrifugal forces in man, we shall be able to perceive them also in the vegetable kingdom. The mineral kingdom alone appears purely physical to us. In it we can trace no centrifugal forces. Minerals are subject to the laws of gravity. But in the case of plants we recognise their outer form as being the result of the two forces. At the same time it becomes apparent to us that we cannot remain at this point in our investigations if we wish to observe anything that is higher in the scale of organic life than the plants. The plant has its etheric body; the animal, when we observe it, possesses life,

and also sensation. It creates, inwardly, a world; this fact arrests our attention, and we see that we must make yet deeper researches. Hence we realise that we must develop our ordinary state of consciousness still further.

Already, as I have shown, a certain stage will have been reached when we are able to see not merely the physical body of man, but the physical body *embedded within the etheric body*, as though in a kind of cloud. But that is not all; the more we strengthen our souls, the more we find greater and greater reality in our thoughts, and it then becomes possible to arrive at a further stage, which consists in suppressing these strong thoughts which have been made so powerful by our own efforts.

In ordinary life if we blot out by degrees our faculties of sight, of hearing, of sensation, and of thinking — we fall asleep. That is an experiment which may easily be carried out. But if one has strengthened the soul in the manner described by the training of thought, of the whole of one's life of concept and feeling, then one can actually learn to suppress the life of the senses. One then arrives at a condition where, above all things, one is not asleep but is very much awake. Indeed, it may even be that one has to guard against losing the power to sleep, while one is striving to reach this condition. If, however, one sets to work in the way I have indicated in my books, every precaution is taken to

prevent any disturbances in the ordinary life.

One succeeds then in being completely awake, though one cannot hear as one hears with the ears. The ordinary memory, too, and ordinary thinking cease. One confronts the world with a perfectly empty but perfectly waking consciousness. And then one sees the *third* human organism — the astral.

Animals also possess this astral organism. In man it bestows the possibility of unfolding a real inner life of experience. Now this is something which is connected neither with the innermost depths of the earth nor with the wide expanse of the universe, but rather it is connected with a state of being inwardly penetrated by forces which are “seen” as the astral body. So now we have the third member of the human organisation.

If one learns to perceive this third member in the manner indicated above, one finds that from the scientific point of view it is indescribably illuminating. One says to oneself — the child grows up and becomes the man; his vital forces are active. But he is not only growing physically, his consciousness is developing at the same time; he is unfolding within himself an image of the outer world.

Can *this* be the result of *physical* growth? Can this be accomplished by the same forces that underlie nutrition and

growth?

When the organic forces that underlie the latter gain the upper hand, the *consciousness* becomes dimmed. We need, therefore, something which is connected with these forces, and which is actually opposed to them. The human being is always growing and always being nourished. But he has within his astral body, as I have described it, something which is perpetually suppressing, inhibiting the forces of growth and nutrition.

So we have in man a process of construction through the physical body in conjunction with the earth; another process of construction through the etheric body in conjunction with the Cosmos, and through the astral body a continuous destruction of the organic processes in the cell-life and the glandular life.

That is the secret of the human organism.

Now we understand why it is that man possesses a soul. If he were to grow continuously like the plant, he could not have a soul. The process of growing must first be destroyed, for it expels the soul. If we had nothing in our brain but the process of building up, and no processes of breaking down and destruction, we could not contain the soul.

Evolution does not proceed in a straight line. It must retreat

in one direction; it must give way. Herein lies the secret of humanity — of the ensouled being.

If we go no further than the consideration of the organisation of the animal, we find ourselves concerned only with its three principles — the physical, etheric, and astral. But if we proceed to the observation of man, we find, when we have progressed yet further with the training of our souls, that we spiritually perceive yet another principle.

Our spiritual perception of the animal discloses that its thinking, feeling, and willing are, in a certain sense, neutral in regard to one another; they are not clearly distinct. One cannot speak of a separate thinking, a separate feeling, and a separate willing, but only of a neutral blending of these three elements. But in the case of man, his inner life depends just upon the fact that he lays hold of his intentions by quiet thought, and that he can *remain* with his intentions; he can either carry them out in deeds, or not carry them out. The animal obeys its impulses. Man separates thinking, feeling, and willing from one another.

How this is so, can only be understood when one has carried one's power of spiritual perception far enough to observe the *fourth* principle of man's organisation — the "I am I" — or the Ego.

As we have just seen, the astral body breaks down the

processes of growth and nutrition; in a sense, it introduces a gradual *dying* into the whole organism. The Ego redeems, out of this destructive process, certain elements which are continually falling away from the combination of the physical and etheric bodies, and rebuilds them.

That is actually the secret of human nature.

If one looks at the human brain, one sees — in those *lighter* parts which lie more below the superficial structures, and which proceed as nerve fibres to the sense organs — a most complicated organisation which, for those who can perceive it in its reality, is in a continual state of deterioration, although so slowly does this take place that it cannot be observed by ordinary physiological means. But, out of all this destruction, that which differentiates man from the animals, namely, the peripheral brain, is built up. This is the foundation of the *human* organisation. With regard to man, naturally, the central brain (the continuation of the sensory nerves and their connections) is more perfect than the peripheral brain, which is, as a matter of fact, more akin to the metabolic processes than the deeper portions of the brain are.

This peripheral brain, which is peculiarly characteristic of man, is organised for these metabolic functions by the Ego-organisation — organised out of what otherwise is in a state of deterioration.[1] And so the activity of the Ego permeates the

entire organism.

[1] The “Ego-organisation” denotes the whole of those attributes of the human being by means of which he attains his “sense of *I am*”. As hearing, sight, taste, etc. each have their “organs” of expression, so also has the Ego. In this case the “organ” is the entire physical body in its self-conscious contact with the outer world. —
&am

The Ego redeems certain elements out of the ruin worked by the astral body, and builds out of them that which underlies an harmonious co-ordination of thinking, feeling, and willing.

I can of course only mention these things, but I wish to point out that one can proceed with the same exactitude when making observations spiritually as one can in any branch of external experimental science and with a full sense of responsibility; so that in every case one seeks for the agreement between what is spiritually observed and what is discovered by empirical physical methods of research. It is exactly the formation of the physical brain which leads one on to apprehend the super-physical, and to attain knowledge by spiritual investigation.

Thus we have these four members of the human organisation. These, in order to maintain health, must be in quite special relation to one another.

We only get water when we mix hydrogen and oxygen in accordance with their specific gravity. In the same way there is a determinative which brings about a normal relationship — if I may say so — between the physical body, the etheric body, the astral body, and the Ego.

We not only have *four*, but *4x4* relative states. All these can be disturbed. An abnormal relation may arise between the etheric and the physical bodies, or between the astral and etheric, or between the Ego and one or another of these. All are deeply connected with one another and are in a special relation to one another. The moment this is disturbed, illness arises.

But this relationship is not uniform throughout the human being; it differs in the different individual organs. If we observe, for instance, a human lung, the physical, etheric, astral, and Ego constituents of this lung are not the same as those of the brain or of the liver. Thus, the entire human organisation is so complicated that the spiritual and the material are differently related in every organ. Therefore, it will be understood that, just as one studies physical anatomy and physical physiology in accordance with external symptoms, so — when one admits the existence of this spiritual investigation, and practises it — one must study with the greatest exactitude the health and disease of *every separate*

organ. In this way one always arrives at a complete and comprehensive knowledge of the human organism. It cannot be so understood if it is observed solely from the physical standpoint. It can only be known through a knowledge of its four principles. One is only clear about any illness when one is able to say which of these four principles either predominates too strongly or is too much suppressed. It is because one is able to observe these things in a spiritual manner that one actually places a spiritual diagnosis alongside the material diagnosis. Therefore what is gained by anthroposophical methods in seeing through the fourfold constitution of man, is gained in addition to all that it is possible to observe of health and disease by ordinary methods.

And further, it is not only possible to behold man spiritually but also the whole of Nature. One is now, for the first time, in a position to find man's relation to the various kingdoms of Nature, and, in medicine, his relation to the healing properties which these kingdoms contain.

Let us take an example. There is a substance which is most widely distributed over the whole earth, and not only over the whole earth, but also, in its finest form, throughout the air. This is silicic acid. It is an enormously important constituent part of the earth. But for those who are able to see these things with higher faculties, all this silicious substance is

revealed as the external manifestation of something spiritual; and an immense and almost overpowering difference is seen to exist between that which ordinary physical methods of observation disclose with regard to silicic acid, or, for example, carbonic acid gas, and that which spiritual investigation discloses.

By the latter method we see that quartz, or rock-crystal, such as we find in the mountains — in fact, all forms of silicious substance — provides a free path for something spiritual. Just as any transparent substance allows light to stream through it, so all silicious substance allows what is spiritually active in the entire world to stream through it.

But we find quite a different relationship towards the spiritual when we come to carbonic acid. Carbonic acid has this peculiarity (for there is something spiritual in *every* physical substance), that the spiritual that is in contact with carbonic acid becomes *individualised*. Carbonic acid retains the spiritual in itself with all its force. The spiritual “selects” carbonic acid as a dwelling-place. In silica it has a transcending tendency — a consuming tendency — but it inheres in carbonic acid as though it felt itself “at home” there.

Carbonic acid processes are present in the breathing and circulation of animals. The former are especially connected with the astral body. The carbonic acid processes are related

to the external physical of the animal, while the astral body is that which is inwardly spiritually active. The astral is therefore the spiritual element, and the carbonic acid process is its physical counterpart and underlies the animal's expirations.

The Ego-organisation is the spiritual inner element in man of that which takes place in man as silicic acid processes. We have silicic acid in our hair, our bones, our organs of sense, in all the extremities and periphery of our bodies — in fact, everywhere where we come into contact with the outer world — and all these silicic acid processes are the external counterpart, the expression from within outwards, of the Ego-organisation.

Now it must be borne in mind that the Ego must, in a certain sense, be strong enough to manipulate, to control, the whole of this silicic acid activity. If the Ego is too weak, the silicic acid is separated out — that is a pathological condition. On the other hand, the astral body must be strong enough to control the carbonic acid process; if it cannot, carbonic acid or its waste products are separated out, and illness results.

It is possible, therefore, in observing the strength or weakness of the astral body to find the cause of an illness rooted in the spiritual. And in observing the Ego-organisation one discovers the cause of those disturbances which either bring about a morbid decomposition of the silicic acid

processes in. the body, or which one must deal with therapeutically by the administration of silicic acid. What happens then is that the spiritual, which is never retained in the material substance itself, passes through it and affects the silicic acid deposited in the body. It takes the place of the Ego itself. In the administration of carbonic acid as a healing agent, it must be so prepared that the spiritual is present in it in the right manner; in using it as a remedy one must be aware that the astral body works in it.

Therefore: One can conceive of a form of therapy which does not only make use of chemical agents, but which is quite consciously administering a cure, in the knowledge that, if a certain quantity of physical substance is given, or a particular solution is prepared as a bath, or if an injection is given, at the same time something of a spiritual nature is quite definitely introduced into the human organism.

So it is perfectly possible to make a bridge from a knowledge of purely physical means of healing to a knowledge which works with spiritual means.

That was the characteristic of the medicine of ancient times; some tradition of it still lingers; it lingers even in some of the recognised cures to-day. And we have to get back to this. We can do so if, without in any way neglecting physical medicine, we add to it what we can gain in spiritual knowledge, not only

of man, but of Nature also. Everything can be carried out with the same exactitude as is the case with regard to physical natural science.

Anthroposophy does not seek to *correct* modern medicine, but to add its own knowledge to it, because ordinary medicine makes demands upon *itself* only.

What I have just briefly indicated is merely the commencement of an exceedingly wide spiritual knowledge, in which, at present, people have very little faith. One can quite well understand that. But some results have already been attained in the sphere of medicine, and these can be studied in practice at Dr. Ita Wegman's Clinical Institute in Arlesheim, Switzerland. And I am convinced that if any person would investigate this advancement and enlargement of the medical field with the same goodwill with which, as a rule, they investigate physical medicine, they would find it not at all difficult to accept the idea of the spiritual in man, and the spiritual in methods of healing him.

Quite briefly, I will give two examples that illustrate what I have said. Let us suppose that by means of this kind of spiritual diagnosis (if I may use such an expression) it is seen that in a patient the etheric body is working too strongly in some particular organ. The astral body and the Ego-organisation are not in a position to control this super-activity

of the etheric body, so that we are faced with an astral body that has become too weak, and possibly also with an Ego which is too weak, and the etheric body therefore predominates. The latter thereby brings about in some particular organ such a condition of the growing and nourishing processes that the *whole* organism cannot be properly held together, owing to the lack of control by the other two principles.

At this point, then, where the etheric body predominates, the human organism appears as though too much exposed to the centrifugal forces of the Cosmos. They are not in equipoise with the centripetal forces of the physical body. The astral body cannot control them. In such a case we are confronted on the one hand by a preponderance of the silicic acid processes, and on the other by an impotence of the Ego to control them.

This fact underlies the formation of tumours, and it is here that the way is indicated for the true understanding of the nature of carcinomatous processes (cancer). Researches into this matter have had very good results and have been carried out in practice. But one cannot understand carcinoma unless one realises that it is due to the predominance of the etheric body, which is not suppressed by a corresponding activity of the astral and the Ego,

The question then arises, what is to be done in order to strengthen the elements of the astral body and the Ego which correspond to the diseased organ, so that the superabundant energy of the etheric organisation can be reduced? This brings us to the question of the therapy of carcinoma, which shall be dealt with in due course.

Thus, through an understanding of the etheric body we are enabled gradually to become acquainted with the nature of that most terrible of all human diseases, and at the same time, by investigating the spiritual nature of the action of the remedies, we shall discover the means to combat it. This is just one example of how illnesses can be understood through the *etheric body.*

But supposing that it is the *astral body* whose forces predominate — supposing that they are so strong that they predominate practically throughout the entire organism, so that there arises a kind of universal stiffening of the whole astral body due to its excessive inner forces; what does such a state of things bring about? When the astral body is not under the control of the Ego — which is to say, when its disintegrating forces are not cancelled by the integrating forces of the Ego — then symptoms appear which are connected with a weakened Ego-organisation.

This results, primarily, in an abnormal activity of the heart.

Further, another occurrence due to a weakened Ego-activity, as described above, is that the glandular functions are disturbed. Since the organisation of the Ego is not sufficiently prominent and cannot exercise enough control, in greater or less degree the peripheral glandular organs begin to secrete too actively. Swollen glands appear — goitre appears.

And we see further how, through this stiffening of the astral body, the silicic acid processes, which should have a reaction inwards, are being pressed outwards, because the Ego is not able work strongly enough in the sense-organs, where it ought to work strongly. So, for instance, the eyes become prominent; the astral body drives them outwards.

It is the task of the Ego to overcome this tendency. Our eyes are actually retained in their right place in our organism by the equipoise that should exist between the astral body and the Ego. So they become prominent because the Ego element in them is too weak to maintain the balance properly. Also, one observes in such cases a general condition of restlessness. One sees, in a word, because the Ego cannot drive back those organic processes which are worked upon by the astral body, that the activity of the whole astral body predominates. In short, the symptoms are those of exophthalmic goitre.

Knowing, therefore, that a disturbance of the balance

between astral body and Ego-organisation produces exophthalmic goitre, one can apply the same principles in effecting a cure.

Hence it can be seen with what exactness one can pursue these methods as regards both pathological conditions and therapeutical agencies, when one investigates the human being in a spiritual way.

Before we pass on from the pathological to the therapeutical — and particularly in connection with the two examples mentioned — it would be well to touch upon some of the principles underlying the assimilation of various substances by the human organism.

One only recognises the entire connection that exists between so-called “Nature” and the human being when one perceives not only that the latter is a physico-psychic-spiritual being consisting of physical body, etheric body, astral body, and Ego, but also when one further perceives that the basis of all natural substances and processes is a concrete and comprehensible spiritual one. But one must first be able to penetrate into this concrete spiritual existence.

Just as, in the natural world, one must distinguish between minerals and plants, so one must distinguish quite definitely between the spiritual elements and beings that express themselves through them.

Suppose we take first the mineral kingdom.

A considerable part of our healing agents are taken from this kingdom, and therefore what can be made use of in medicine out of spiritual bases emanates from minerals to a very large extent. We find that the spiritual element is connected in such a way with minerals that it establishes a particular relation between them and the Ego-organisation. It is credible that if a mineral substance is administered, either by mouth or by injection, it works principally upon the human organism itself, and makes for either health or ill-health. But what really takes place is that the physical mineral, as such, as it is regarded and handled by the chemist or the physicist, actually does *not* work upon the organism, but remains as it is. The physical substance itself, when seen by spiritual observation, shows scarcely any metamorphosis when it is absorbed. On the contrary, what is spiritual in the substance works with extraordinary strength upon the Ego.

So one can say that the spirit, for instance of a rock crystal, affects the Ego. The Ego controls the human being when it contains something silicious — that is, the spiritual element of silicic acid. That is what is so remarkable.

Again, if we take the vegetable kingdom, plants do not only possess a physical form, they possess also what I have characterised as an etheric body. Suppose we administer

some plant substance, either by mouth or by injection, what is in the plant works as a rule solely upon the astral body. (These things are described in a general sense; there are always exceptions, which may also be studied.)

Everything derived from the animal kingdom, in whatever way it may be manufactured — out of fluids or solids — when it is administered, works upon the etheric body. This is most particularly interesting, because in this spiritual-medical work results have been attained by using for instance, in certain cases, animal products derived from the secretions of the *hypophysis cerebri*. These have been used successfully on rickety children or in cases of child-deformity, and so on.

There are also other animal products that work upon the human etheric body, either strengthening it or weakening it. In short, this is their principal function.

Anything injected out of one human being into another affects *only* the physical body; here there is solely a working of the physical upon the physical. For example, if human blood is transfused, nothing comes into consideration save what can take place as a purely physical phenomenon by means of the blood. A remarkable example of this could be observed when, in vaccinations against smallpox, a change was made from using human lymph to using calf-lymph. It was possible to observe then how the human lymph worked

only upon the physical body, and how the effect went, so to speak, a stage higher when calf-lymph was introduced, by its becoming transferred to the etheric body.

Thus it becomes possible to see, by developing spiritual powers of observation, how Nature works, as it were, in degrees, or steps, upon human beings — the mineral being made use of in a certain sense by the Ego, the plant by the astral body, the animal by the etheric body, and the human physical body by the human physical body. In the latter case there is no longer anything spiritual to be described. Indeed, even as regards the animal kingdom, we can no longer speak of the “spiritual” in the animal product, but only of the “etheric.”

It is only through all these various connections that one can gain a true conception of how man — in both health and disease — is really immersed in the whole natural order. But one attains also to an inner perception of a still further continuation of the workings of nature in the human organism.

One may now ask, what is to be one’s attitude towards cancer! We have seen how the etheric body is able to develop over-strong forces from itself in some particular organ. The centrifugal forces — that is, the forces that tend outwards into the Cosmos — become too powerful; the astral body and the Ego are too weak to counteract them. Spiritual knowledge now comes to one’s aid. One can now try either to make the

astral body stronger, in which case one administers something from the plant kingdom, or one must restrain the etheric body, and in that case one makes use of the animal kingdom.

Spiritual investigation has led to the adoption of the former course — that which relates to the astral body. In order to cure cancer, the forces of the astral body must be made stronger. And it may now be admitted that the remedy has really been discovered in the plant kingdom.

We have been accused of dilettantism and so forth, because we make use of a parasitic plant — the mistletoe (which has been used in medicine mainly for epilepsy and similar conditions) — and because we prepare it in a very special manner, in order to discover the way which will lead to the healing of cancer.

If you have observed trees which bear a remarkable outgrowth upon the trunk, resembling swellings, especially if you have seen them in section, you will notice that the whole tendency of growth, which usually has a vertical direction, has at these places a deflection at right angles, becoming therefore horizontal. It presses outwards as though another trunk were beginning to grow; and you find something that is as though drawn out of the tree itself — something parasitic. More closely studied, one discovers that any tree which has

such an outgrowth is somewhere or other suppressed, restrained, in its physical development. Sufficient physical material has not been available everywhere, in order to keep pace with the growth forces of the etheric body. The physical body remains behind. The etheric body, which otherwise strives centrifugally to project the physical substance out into the Cosmos, is, as it were, left alone in this portion of the tree. Too little physical substance passes through it, or, rather, matter that has too little physical force. The result is, that the etheric body takes a downward direction to the lower part of the tree, which is connected with stronger physical forces.

Now let us imagine that this does not happen, but, instead, the mistletoe appears; and now there occurs through this plant, which has also its own etheric body, what otherwise takes place through the etheric body of the tree.

From this there results a very special relationship between the mistletoe and the tree. The tree, which is rooted directly in the earth, makes use of the forces which it absorbs from the earth. The mistletoe, growing on the tree, uses what the tree gives it; the tree is, in a sense, the earth for the mistletoe. The mistletoe, therefore, brings about artificially that which, when it is *not* present, results in the “swellings” which are due to a hypertrophy of the tree’s etheric organisation. The mistletoe takes away what the tree only gives up when it has too little physical substance, so that its etheric element is excessive.

insight into the fact that the spiritual element in the plant, which in this case is drawn out of it by the parasitic growth, works upon the human astral body.

Thus it can be seen how concretely what I have said may be verified — namely, that it is a question of not merely administering remedies in the manner of the chemist — in the sense in which the chemist speaks and thinks of remedies — but it is a question of administering the spiritual, the super-physical, which the various substances contain.

I have also referred above to the fact that in exophthalmic goitre (Graves' disease) the astral body becomes stiffer, and that the Ego-organisation is unable to deal with this condition. The symptoms are as I have described. This is a case in which it is necessary to strengthen the forces of the Ego. We must consider for a moment something which plays quite an unimportant part in our ordinary associations with the external world; but it is just such apparently unimportant substances which, as regards their spiritual element, have the greatest effect upon the spiritual in the human being. For example, one finds

that oxide of copper has the greatest imaginable effect upon the Ego-organisation of man; it really strengthens it. So, if one gives oxide of copper to a person suffering from Graves' disease, the effect is that one creates a strong Ego-

organisation that dominates the stiffened astral body; the oxide of copper comes, as it were, to the rescue of the Ego, and the correct balance is thus restored.

I have quoted these two examples especially in order to show how every product in all the expanse of Nature may be studied, and the question asked: “How does this or that product work upon the physical body of man? how does it work upon the etheric body? and how upon the astral body and the Ego-organisation?”

It all rests, therefore, upon our penetration into the profound secrets of Nature. This search into Nature’s secrets — into the mysteries of Nature — is the only possible way to *combine* the observation of human disease with the observation of the healing agencies. If I know how, let us say, a magnet will affect iron filings, then I know *what* is taking place. Similarly, if I know in what respect oxide of copper is “spiritual,” and on the other hand what is lacking in the human being when he has the symptoms of exophthalmic goitre, that is to permeate what is called medicine with spiritual knowledge.

One can look back upon the evolution of humanity, that is to say upon the evolution of the spirit of humanity which has given birth to the various civilisations, and which brought forth knowledge also and science; and if, in such a retrospect, one

looks into a past so remote that it is only possible to reach it by means of the spiritual vision which I have described, one comes upon centres of knowledge quite unlike our present-day schools, wherein men were led to penetrate into a knowledge of Nature and of humanity, after their souls were first prepared in such a way that they could perceive the spiritual in all the external world.

These centres of knowledge, which we have become accustomed to speak of as the “mysteries,” were not just merely “schools,” but fundamentally they were representative of certain things which are regarded quite separately from one another in the life of to-day. They were centres of religion and of art, as well as of knowledge concerning all the various departments of human culture.

They were so organised that those who were set apart as teachers did not instruct their pupils by means of mere abstract concepts, but by means of pictures — of imagery. These pictures, by reason of their inner characteristics, represented the living relationships and connections between all things in the world. Therefore this imagery was able to produce its effects through ceremonial, as we should call it to-day. In its further development this imagery became permeated with beauty. Religious ceremony became artistic. And later, when what had been gained — not from arbitrary fantasies, but from out of these images or pictures, which had

been extracted from out of the world-secrets themselves — was expressed in ideas, it became, at that time, *science*. The same pictures when presented in such a way that they called forth an essential quality of the human will that could be expressed as goodness — that was *religion*. And again, presented so that they ravished and exalted the senses, touched the emotions, and lifted the soul to the contemplation of beauty — that was *art*.

The centres of art were indissolubly linked with the centres of religion and of science. There was no one-sided appreciation of anything through the human reason alone, or through sense-perception alone, or through external physical experiment alone, but the whole human being was involved — body, soul, and spirit.

There was penetration into the profoundest nature of all things — to those depths where reality revealed itself; on the one hand stimulating to goodness, on the other hand to the true expression of ideas. To follow this path, which leads to truth, to beauty, and to goodness, was spoken of, and is still spoken of, as the way of initiation — to the knowledge of the "beginnings" of things. For men were aware that they indeed lived in these beginnings when they conjured them forth in religious ceremonial, in the revelations of beauty, and in the rightly created world of ideas; and so called this attitude which they bore towards the things of the world, "initiation-

knowledge” — the knowledge of the beginnings from out of which alone man is able to grasp the true nature of things, and so use them according to his will.

So men sought for an initiation-science which could penetrate into the mysteries of the world — to the “beginnings.”

A time had to. come in the course of human development when this initiation-science withdrew; for it became necessary for men to direct their spiritual energies inwards in order to attain to greater self-consciousness. Initiation-science became as though dreamlike — instinctive. It was not at that time a matter of developing human *freedom*, for such a development towards freedom has only come about because mankind has been for a time driven away from the beginnings; he has lost the initiation-vision, and turning away from the beginnings, contemplates what is related more to the endings of things — to the external revelations of the senses, and to all that, through the senses, may be discovered by experiment concerning the ultimate, concerning the endings.

The time has now come when, having achieved an immeasurably extensive science of the superficial — if I may call it so — which can have only quite an external connection with art or religion, we must once again seek an initiation-science; but we must seek it with the consciousness which we

have evolved in ourselves by means of exact science; a consciousness which, in respect of the new form of initiation-knowledge, will function no less perfectly than it does in connection with the exact sciences.

A bridge will then be built between that world-conception which links the human soul with its origins by means of inwardly conceived ideas, and the practical manipulation of the realities contained in those ideas.

In the ancient mysteries, initiation-knowledge was especially bound up with all that was connected with the healing of humanity. There was a real art of healing. For indeed, the mystery-healing *was* an art, in that it aroused in man the perception that the process of healing was at the same time a sacrificial process.

In order to satisfy the inner needs of the human soul, there must once again be a closer bond between healing and our philosophical conception of the world. And it is this which a knowledge of the needs of the age seeks to find in the Anthroposophical Movement.

The Anthroposophical Movement, whose headquarters are in Dornach, Switzerland, does not interpose anything arbitrary into life; neither does it stand for any sort of abstract mysticism. It desires rather to enter in a wholly practical way into every sphere of human activity. It seeks to attain with

complete self-consciousness what was striven for in ancient times instinctively.

Even though we are only making a beginning, at any rate we are creating the possibility of a return to what, in the ancient mysteries, was a natural, a self-evident thing — *medicine existing in closest communion with spiritual vision.*